

THE
MORAL TALES
OF
M. MARMONTEL.

Translated from the French

BY

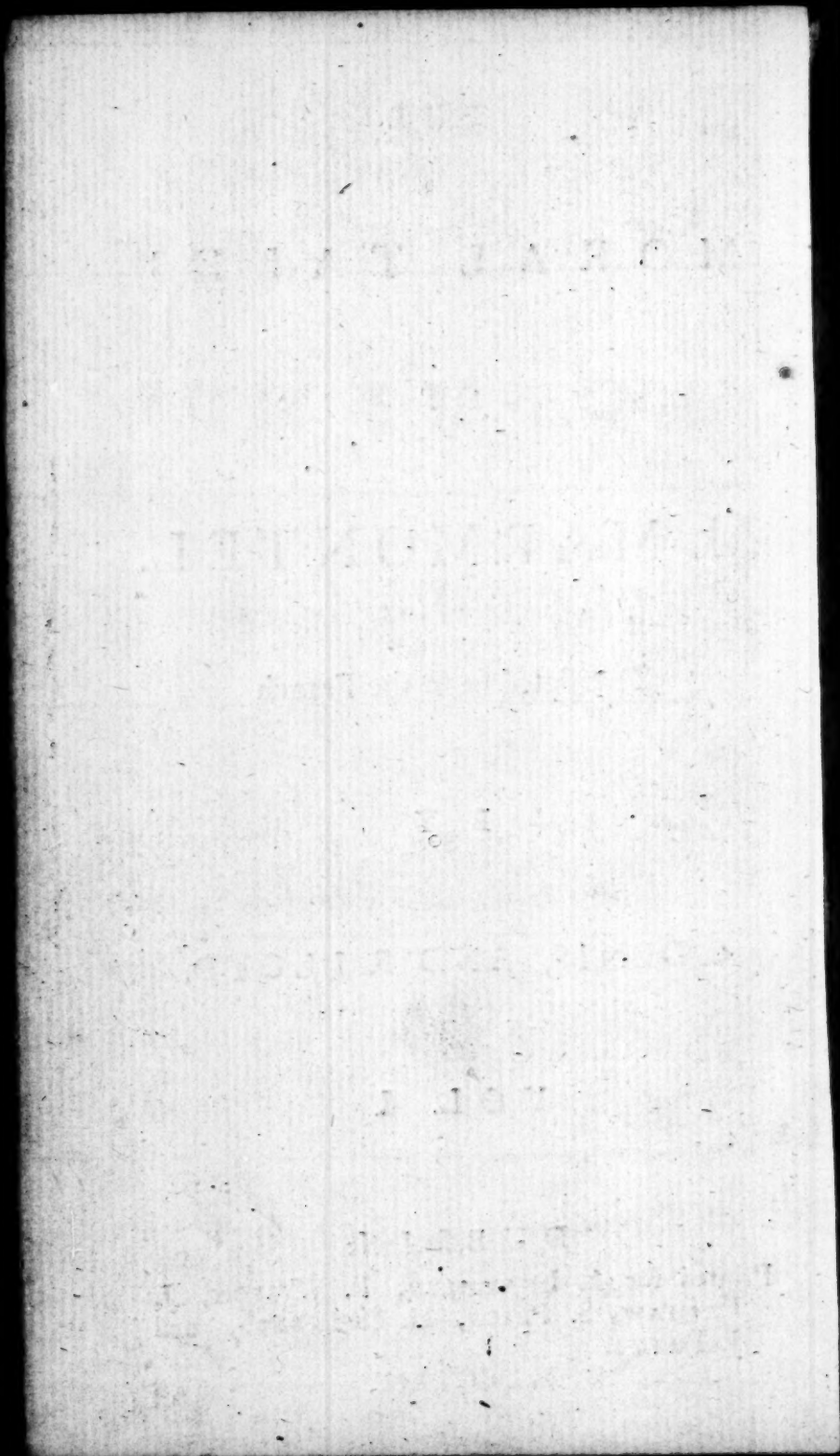
C. DENIS, AND R. LLOYD,

VOL. I

DUBLIN:

Printed for A. LEATHLEY, P. WILSON, J.
EXSHAW, S. PRICE, H. SAUNDERS, and
J. POTTS.

M DCC LXIV. —





CONTENTS

OF THE

FIRST VOLUME.

A lcibiades, or Self	Page 1
Soliman the Second	29
The Scruple	49
The Four Phials, or the Adventures of Alc'donis of Magara	74
Lausus and Lydia	100
Happily	114
The two Unfortunate Ladies	134
All or Nothing	151
The Sham Philosopher	171
ALCI-	

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

FIRST VOLUME

A

The

of

the

and

the



THE
MORAL TALES.
OF
M. MARMONTEL.

ALCIBIADES,

OR SELF.

NATURE and fortune seemed to have join'd to form the happiness of Alcibiades. He had wealth, fine talents, beauty, birth, was in the flower of his age, and full vigour of health.—

How many qualifications to entitle a man to absurdities. Alcibiades had but one; he would be lov'd solely for himself. He had made conquests in Athens, from coquetry even up to wisdom. But was he the object, was it him they were in love with? This delicacy came into his head one morning, as he was going to pay his addresses

VOL. I.

B

to

to a prude; that is the moment of reflexion. Alcibiades was taken up with the idea of pure sentiment, which is the metaphysics of love. I am a fine dupe indeed, says he, to throw away my time and attention upon a woman, who, perhaps, only loves me for her own sake. I will find it out by all the Gods, and if it is so, let her look among the boxers and gladiators for a lover to supply my place.

The pretty prude, according to custom, always made some little resistance to the ardour of Alcibiades.—O! it was a thing impossible! she could not think of it without a blush! She wished for all the world that she were not half so young, that she might be more at her own liberty, and less pestered with addresses. Alcibiades took her at her word. I perceive, Madam, says he one day, that these little compliances cost you some uneasiness; I will give you therefore a proof of the most perfect disinterested love. Yes, Madam, since you desire it, our souls shall be united, and I give you my word I will solicit nothing more.

The prude commended this resolution with an air which might easily have destroyed it; but Alcibiades was a man of his word. She was surprized and chagrined. It was necessary, however, to conceal it.

The next day she dressed herself in all the charms of the most engaging dishabille. Desire sparkled in her eyes, and her whole air was carelessness and pleasure. The thinnest coverings, the most favourable disorder; every thing invited Alcibiades to forget his resolution. He perceived the snare. What a conquest, Madam, says he, am I to gain over myself? I see that love has a mind to put me to the proof, and I am glad of it.

The

The delicacy of my sentiments will appear in the fuller lustre. Those light transparent coverings, those pillows which seem the throne of pleasure, your beauty, my desires: how many enemies to overcome! Ulysses could not have escaped them. Hercules would have sunk under them. I will be wiser than Ulysses, and less frail than Hercules. Yes, Madam, I will shew you, that the pleasure of loving only shall take place of all other pleasures.—You are a most charming creature, says she; and I flatter myself that I have a very singular lover. I am only afraid of one thing; your love will grow weak under this severity.—On the contrary, briskly reply'd Alcibiades, it will be the stronger and more ardent.—But then you are young, and people are not always masters of themselves; and, I think, your fidelity would be in great danger, if I give you up to your own desires. Don't be uneasy, Madam, I will answer for every thing. If I can overcome them in your presence, where is it that I shall not be master of them?—Will you promise me then at least, says she, that if they grow too pressing and intolerable, you will make a free confession to me? I should be very sorry that you should be restrained by any false shame. Don't picque yourself on keeping your word with me; there is nothing that I would not sooner pardon than infidelity.—Yes, Madam, I will most sincerely confess my weakness, whenever I find myself on the point of yielding. But let me at least try my powers; I know they will go still further, and I hope love will inspire me with new ones. The prude was almost mad; but yet she could not complain without contradicting herself; she was resolved, however, to wait, in hopes that upon some new trial Alcibiades must surrender. When he waked

in the morning. he received the following note ;
 “ I have had a most cruel night, let me see you,
 I cannot live without you.”

He goes to visit the prude. The window curtains were but half open, and the light broke gently into the apartment on waves of purple. The prude was yet in her bed, which was sprinkled over with roses. “ Come, says she, in a plaintive voice, come and calm my uneasiness. I have been frightened all night with a horrid dream. I thought I saw you upon your knees at the feet of a rival. I shudder even now. I have told you, Alcibiades, that I cannot live in the fear of your proving unfaithful. My misfortune would be so much the more sensible, as I should be the cause of it, and I will at least have nothing to reproach myself with. You were in the right to promise to subdue yourself, but you are too young to hold out long. Do I not know you? I perceive I have desired too much of you ; I know it would be both imprudence and cruelty to impose so hard a law upon you. While she was saying this in the most affecting manner, Alcibiades cast himself at her feet. I shall be very unhappy, Madam, says he, if you entertain so mean an opinion of me, as not to think me capable of being firmly attach’d to you by the ties of sentiment alone ! After all, of what do I deprive myself ? of that which debases love. I blush to think you should consider such a sacrifice as any thing. But were it as great a one as you seem to imagine, I should only reap the greater glory.—No, my dear Alcibiades, replies the prude, stretching out her hand to him, I do not insist upon a sacrifice which must cost you so much. I am sufficiently assured of, and delighted with, the pure and delicate passion you have discovered towards me. Be happy, I consent. I am, Madam,

dam, cried he, in the happiness of living only for you. Spare your suspicions, and your compassion, you see before you a lover, the most faithful, the most tender, and most respectful.— And the most stupid, interrupted she, drawing the curtains briskly, and calling up her servants. Alcibiades went out in a rage, to find that he was beloved only as other people were, and fully resolved never to visit more a woman, who had only chosen him for her own pleasure. It was not thus, says he, they loved in the age of innocence, and if the young Glycerium entertains such thoughts of me, as her eyes seem to tell, I am very certain her love will be truly pure.

Glycerium, in her fifteenth year, was already the object of general attention; all the youth in Athens were enamoured of her. Imagine a rose, at the moment of its opening, such was the freshness and lustre of her beauty.

Alcibiades presented himself before her, and his rivals were put to flight. It was not then the custom at Athens, to marry to-day, to hate and despise one another next morning, and the young people before marriage, had always the liberty of seeing and conversing together with a decent and becoming freedom. The ladies did not leave the care of their virtue to their guardians; but took the trouble of being discreet upon themselves. Modesty has been a weak combatant, ever since she has been deprived of the honours of a victory. Glycerium's made an excellent defence. Alcibiades left nothing unturned to surprize it, or to overcome it. He praised the young Athenian for her fine talents, her graceful charms, and her exquisite beauty. He observed in every thing she said, an elegance which she never thought of, and a delicacy of which she was well assured. What

pity it is, that with so many charms, she should have an insensible heart ! I adore you, Madam, says he, and I am happy if you love me ; don't be afraid to confess it, to be ingenuous is the peculiar virtue of your age. They did well to give the name of prudence to dissimulation ; that pretty mouth is not made to betray the sentiments of your heart ; let it be the organ of love, he formed it for himself. If you desire me to be sincere, answered Glycerium, with a modesty mixed with great tenderness, contrive a way for me to be so without a blush. I will not by any means betray my heart, but neither will I betray my duty, and, if I said any more, I should betray either the one or the other. Glycerium was willing, before she explained herself, that the match should be concluded. Alcibiades wanted her to explain herself, even before it was thought on. It will be a fine time, says he, to assure me of your love, when marriage has made it a duty, and I shall have reduced you to the necessity of feigning it ! It is now, while you are free, and in your own power, that we hear from your own mouth the disinterested avowal of a pure and natural sentiment, would be the most flattering to me.—Well then, be content, and don't reproach me with a want of sensibility ; since I have seen you, my heart has been sufficiently so. You may judge of my esteem, by my entrusting this secret to you, but now it has escaped me, I beg one favour of you ; not to converse with me in this private tête-à-tête manner, till you have agreed with those on whom I depend. This confession, which Alcibiades obtained, would have made a less difficult lover perfectly happy, but he was entirely taken up with his chimerical idea. He was resolved at all events, to find out whether he was beloved purely for himself.

himself. I will not dissemble, says he, the business I am upon, may meet with bad success. Your relations received me with a cold politeness, so discouraging, that I should have taken my leave, had not the pleasure of seeing you overcome my delicacy; but if I oblige your father to explain himself, it will be no more time for dissembling. He is a member of the Areopagus; Socrates, the best of men, is there suspected, and become odious. I am the friend and pupil of Socrates, and I fear that the hatred they conceive against him, may extend even to me. My fears, perhaps, go too far, but if your father sacrifices us to his political principles, if he refuses me your hand, what will you determine to do? To be miserable, answered Glycerium, and yield to my fate.—Then you would not see me any more?—If they forbid me to see you, it would be proper that I should obey.—You would then obey too, if they proposed another husband—I will be a victim to my duty.—And from that duty, you would love the husband they had chosen for you?—I will endeavour not to hate him; but what questions are these! What would you think of me, if my sentiments were otherwise?—That you would love me as you ought to love.—That I do love is too true—No, Glycerium, love knows no law, he surmounts all obstacles; but I will do you justice. This sentiment is far above your age. It requires firm and courageous minds, which difficulties do but animate, and disappointment cannot dismay. Such love is, I own, very rare. To want a name, or a fortune which is to be disposed of, to run into the arms of a husband, to save themselves from their parents, that is what they call love, and which I call only a thirst for independence. You exercise a glorious power, says she, with tears

in her eyes, to add injury to reproaches. I have said nothing, but what proceeded from tenderness, and was perfectly honourable. Have I hesitated a moment to sacrifice all your rivals to you? What do you desire more of me? I desire, says he, that you will swear eternal constancy to me, that you will swear that you will be mine, let what will happen, and that you will be only mine. Upon my word, Sir, that is what I never will do.—Upon my word, Madam, I ought to have expected that answer from you, and I blush to have exposed myself so much. At these words he withdrew in a violent passion, saying to himself, I was much in the right to fall in love with a child who has no soul, and whose heart is to be given away only by the direction of her parents.

There was in Athens a young widow, who seemed inconsolable for the loss of her husband. Alcibiades, with the rest of the world came to pay his first respects to her, with that grave air, which decency directs towards persons in affliction. The widow found very sensible consolation from the discourses of this pupil of Socrates, and Alcibiades found inexpressible charms in the tears of the widow. Nevertheless, their morality became gay-er and gayer every day. They made a fine eulogium on the good qualities of the deceased, and afterwards agreed upon his bad ones. He was, to be sure, one of the best sort of men in the world; but then he was not absolutely possessed of common sense. He had a very good person; but neither air nor elegance. He was very careful and obliging; but then his officiousness was troublesome and fatiguing. In short, she was absolutely in despair on having lost so good a husband, but she was fully resolved never to take a second. How, says Alcibiades, at your age to renounce
matri-

matrimony! I must confess, answered the widow, I am as much frightened at liberty, as I am disgusted at slavery and subjection. At my age, left entirely to myself, and having no dependence, what shall become of me? Alcibiades did not fail to insinuate to her, that there was still a mean to take between the slavery of marriage, and the loveliness of widowhood, and in regard to decency and appearances, it was very easy to reconcile them with a tender and affectionate attachment. She was shocked with such a proposition; no, she had rather die. Die at the age of the Loves and the Graces! It was easy to turn such a project into ridicule, and the widow dreaded nothing so much as appearing ridiculous. She was then resolved not to die. It was already decided, that she could not possibly live without somebody for a protector, that somebody must be a lover, and without any partiality or prevention, she knew of nobody more worthy of such regard, and more likely to please her than Alcibiades. He redoubled his assiduity. At first she began to complain of it, soon it became familiar; at last she desired it might be a secret; and to avoid all imprudence, every thing was settled with the utmost decency.

Alcibiades was at the full of all his wishes. 'Twas neither the pleasures of love, nor the advantages of marriage that she loved him for, 'twas himself; at least so he thought. He triumphed over the grief, the discretion, the resolution of a woman who desired nothing more of him than secrecy and love. The widow, on her part, congratulated herself on keeping under her own laws, the object of jealousy to all the beauties of Greece. But who can enjoy their pleasures without a confidant? Alcibiades, a lover in secret, was a lover as other men, and the finest tri-

umph in the world is of no consequence, unless
 publickly solemnized. An author says, it is not
 enough to be in a fine country, if one has not
 somebody by, to whom we may say, this is a de-
 lightful country. In the same manner, the wi-
 dow found it not enough to have Alcibiades for a
 lover, if she could not tell somebody Alcibiades
 is a lover of mine. She then told it in confidence
 to an intimate friend, who told it to her lover,
 and he told it to all Greece. Alcibiades, asto-
 nished to find this adventure so publickly known,
 thought it proper to inform the widow of it, who
 accused him of indiscretion. If I were cul-
 pable, says he, in order to spread the report, I
 would let it still run about the town; and I wish
 nothing so much as to put a stop to it. Let us
 be careful, let us avoid being seen in public; and
 when an accident brings us together, don't be un-
 easy at any distant or careless air which I may af-
 fect before you. The widow heard all this in a
 very bad humour; I know, says she, you will be
 more at your ease. You grow tired of a constant
 attention, and you desire nothing more than to be
 upon the wing. But for me, how would you have
 me appear? I cannot take upon me to turn co-
 quette. Disgusted and sick of every thing in
 your absence, thoughtful and embarrassed when
 near you, I shall appear as if I were trifled with,
 and perhaps, in effect, I shall be so. If they are
 persuaded that we are together, there is no reme-
 dy. The public never recant. What will then
 be the consequence of this pretended secret? The
 world will take you for an inconstant lover, and
 me for the cast-off mistress. This answer of the
 widow's surprized Alcibiades: her conduct con-
 founded him; every day she behaved with more
 ease, and assumed greater liberties. At public
 places

places she always insisted upon his sitting close behind her, he must give her his hand to lead her to the temple, and be an indispensable party in her walks, and at her entertainments. She affected particularly to mix with her rivals, and in the midst of the circle would not suffer him to look on any other but herself. She spoke to him in a tone of importance, looked upon him with an air of mystery, smiled at him most intelligently, and whispered him in the ear with that familiarity, which easily indicates to the public how well the parties are agreed. He plainly perceived that she led him about like a slave tied to her car. I have mistaken affectation for sentiment, says he, with a sigh, it is not me she loves, 'tis the glory of the conquest; she would despise me if she had no rivals. Vanity is incapable and unworthy of fixing love.

The jealousy of the philosophers could not forgive Socrates for publickly teaching truth and virtue; every day complaints were carried to the Areopagus against this dangerous citizen. Socrates, taken up in doing good, suffered them to say all the ill which they thought proper; but Alcibiades, devoted to his master, faced all his enemies. He presented himself before the magistrates. He reproached them with hearkening to the vilest slanderers, and of giving protection to the basest impostors, and spoke of Socrates as the justest and wisest among mortals. Enthusiasm rendered him eloquent. And in one of the conferences which he had with the members of the Areopagus, in the presence of the judge's wife, he spoke with so much sweetness and vehemence, with so much reason and argument, and the noble flame so lighted up his beauty, that the good woman was touched to the very soul. She took this un-

easiness

easiness for nothing more than admiration. Socrates, says she, to her husband, is indeed a divine man, if he forms such disciples: I am enchanted with this young man's eloquence; it is impossible to hear him without growing better. The magistrate, who never suspected his wife's prudence, told Alcibiades the commendation she had passed upon him. Alcibiades was delighted, and desired permission of the husband to cultivate the esteem of his wife. My wife, says he, is a philosopher too, and I shall be glad to see you dispute together. Rodope, that was the name of this worthy lady, picqued herself upon her knowledge of philosophy, and that of Socrates, delivered from Alcibiades's mouth, gained upon her more and more every day. I forgot to observe, that she was at that age, when though she could not be a beauty, she was yet handsome; when women, though they are less lovely, know much better how to love. Alcibiades was constant in his visits to her. She neither distrusted him nor herself. The study of wisdom took up all their conversation. The lessons of Socrates passed into the soul of Rodope from Alcibiades, and in their passage received additional charms. 'Twas like a stream of pure water, which runs over the flowers. Rodope was every day more and more changed. She made him define, according to the principles of Socrates, wisdom, virtue, justice and truth. Friendship came in its turn; and after having deeply considered its essence, I should like to know, says she, what difference Socrates makes between love and friendship? Although Socrates, answered Alcibiades, is not of those sort of philosophers, who analyse every thing, he distinguishes three loves. One gross and mean, which is common to us with brutes, the impulse of want, and the taste of pleasure: the

the other pure and celestial, and which brings us nearer to the Gods; it is the warmth and tenderness of friendship. The third, which partakes of the two first, keeps a mean between Gods and brutes, and seems most natural to men; it is the union of the souls cemented by the senses.

Socrates gives the preference to the pure delights of friendship; but as he does not make a crime in nature to have united spirit with matter, he does not suppose it to be one in man, to feel and acknowledge this mixture in his pleasures and inclinations. Above all, when nature has joined a beautiful body with a beautiful soul, he would have us respect the work of nature. For though Socrates be ugly and deformed, yet does he do justice to beauty. If he knew, for example, with whom I am treating upon subjects of philosophy, I doubt not but he would find fault with me for employing my lessons so badly. I dispense with your gallantry, interrupted Rodope. I am speaking to a philosopher; and young as he is, I would have him inform me, and not flatter me. Let us return to your master's principles. He permits love, you say, but does he know of its levities and excesses? Yes, Madam, as he knows those of drunkenness, and yet permits the use of wine. The comparison is not just, says Rodope, we are at liberty in the choice of our wines, and the moderating the use of them. Have we the same liberty in love that is without choice or measure? Certainly, says Alcibiades, in a man that is unprincipled and immoral; but Socrates begins, by making men wiser and more virtuous, and 'tis to them that he permits love. He knows that they will love nothing but what is honourable, and then there is no risque of loving to excess. The mutual inclination of two
virtuous

virtuous souls can only render them more virtuous. Every answer of Alcibiades cleared away some difficulty in the mind of Rodope, and made the bias, which carried her towards him, more powerful and rapid. Nothing remained now but conjugal faith, and that was a gordian knot. Rodope was not one of those with whom it must be cut, it was absolutely necessary to be untied. Alcibiades sounded her at a distance, as they were one day upon the article of society. Want, says Alcibiades, has re-united men, common interest has settled their duties, and the abuse of them has produced laws. All this is sacred; but all this enters not into our mind. As men are connected only externally, the mutual duties which they impose upon themselves pass not the surface. Nature alone is the lawgiver of the heart: she alone can inspire gratitude, friendship, love: sentiment cannot be a duty from institution. Hence it happens, that in marriage, for example, one can neither promise nor expect more than a corporeal attachment. Rodope, who had relished the beginning, was afraid of the consequence. What, says she, have I promised my husband to behave only as if I lov'd him?—What could you promise him?—To love him indeed, says she, with a faltering voice.—He has promised you then in his turn to be not only amiable, but the most amiable of all men in your eyes.—He has promised to do the best in his power, and has kept his word.—Very well, and you do all in your power too to love him only; but you are neither the one nor the other sure of success.—This is shocking philosophy, cry'd Rodope! Happily, Madam, it is not so shocking; there would be but too many guilty offenders, if
conjugal

conjugal love were an essential duty.——How, Sir, do you doubt it?—I doubt nothing, Madam, but my frankness may perhaps offend you; and I don't see you disposed to imitate it. I thought I was talking to a philosopher, but find I have been talking only to a lady of wit. I take my leave, confounded indeed at the mistake, but will give you at least an example of sincerity at parting. I believe I have morals as pure and honourable as the most virtuous woman; I know too, as well as she, how far we are bound by honour, and the religion of our oath; I know the laws of matrimony, and the crime that attends the violation of them: nevertheless, had I married a thousand women, I should never have felt the least reproach for thinking you alone more beautiful, and a thousand times more amiable, than all these thousand women together. According to you, in order to be virtuous, we must have neither eyes nor soul; I congratulate you, Madam, on having arrived at this degree of perfection.

This discourse, pronounced in a peevish and angry tone, left Rodope in an amazement, which she could hardly recover from. From that time Alcibiades broke off his visits. She had discovered at his parting, a warmer interest than what arose merely from the heat of the dispute; she perceived too, that on her side, the philosophical conferences were not what she regretted the most. A distaste to every thing, a distaste to herself, a secret repugnance to the caresses and assiduities of her husband, in short, the confusion and blushes, which the very name of Alcibiades occasion'd, all these things made her dread the danger of seeing him again, and yet she very impatiently desired to see him once more. Her husband brought him back to her, as she had told him they had fallen

fallen out with one another upon a verbal dispute. The magistrate only rallied Alcibiades, and obliged him to return. The interview was exceeding serious; the husband amused himself with them some little time, but his business called him elsewhere. I leave you, says he, and I hope after you have quarrelled about words, you will come to a reconciliation about things. The good man meant no evil, but his wife could not help blushing for him.

After a pretty long silence, Alcibiades took up the discourse. Our conversations, Madam, says he, were my delight, and tho' I had a propensity to dissipation, you have taught me to relish and prefer every thing to the charms of solitude. I was no longer of the world, I was not myself, I was yours wholly. Don't think that the idle hope of seducing you, has entered into my mind. Virtue, much more than wit or beauty, has enslaved me to your laws. But as I loved you with a passion as delicate as it was tender, I flattered myself with inspiring you with the like. This pure and virtuous love offends you, or rather it incommodes you, for it is not possible that you can really condemn it. All that I feel for you, Madam, you feel for another, you have confessed it. I can neither reproach you, nor complain; allow only that I am not happy. Perhaps there is but one woman in all Athens, who has a love for her husband, and it is precisely that very woman I am desperately in love with. Upon my word, you are mighty simple for the scholar of a sage, says Rodope smiling. He answered very gravely; she replied again jestingly; he laid hold of her hand; she grew angry; he kiss'd her hand, she wanted to withdraw it; he with-held her,
she

she blush'd, and the heads of the philosophers were turned.

There is no occasion to say how Rodope was afflicted, or how she comforted herself: All this is easily imagin'd in a virtuous and affectionate wife.

She was terribly frightened for the peace and honour of her husband. Alcibiades took an oath of inviolable secrecy to her; but the malice of the public rendered his indiscretion unnecessary. They knew that he was not that sort of man, to be eternally talking philosophy to a pretty woman. His assiduities created suspicions, and the suspicions of the world pass for certainties. It was settled, that Alcibiades had had Rodope. The report came to the ears of the husband; he did not care to give any credit to it, but his own and his wife's honour made it necessary, that she should be above suspicion. He told her the necessity of dismissing Alcibiades with so much good nature, reason, and confidence, that she had not even the courage to reply. There is nothing more irksome to a sensible and naturally virtuous mind, than receiving marks of esteem, which it does not deserve.

Rodope from that moment, resolved never to see Alcibiades more; and the more weakness she felt in herself towards him, she shewed the greater firmness in breaking with him for ever. He could not overcome her with all his eloquence. I have suffered myself to be persuaded, that the secret injuries done to a husband were nothing, but appearances alone are real injuries from the moment they hurt his honour, or disturb his peace. I am not obliged to love my husband, I believe it, but it is my indispensable duty to make him happy, as far as it is in my power.—So
Madam,

Madam, you prefer his happiness to mine—I prefer my engagements to my inclinations ; that word which has now escaped me, shall be my last weakness. I thought, said Alcibiades somewhat picqued, I had been beloved. Adieu, Madam, I see I owed my happiness only to the caprice of a moment. These are your honourable ladies, continued he. When they like us, 'tis an excess of love, when they quit us, 'tis an effort of virtue, and this love, and this virtue is at the bottom nothing more than a mere phantasy which comes and goes. I have deserved all these affronts, says Rodope, bursting into tears. A woman who has no respect for herself, cannot hope for any from others. It is very just that our weaknesses should bring us into contempt.

Alcibiades was convinced, after so many proofs, that there was no reliance upon women. But he was confident enough of himself to run into new dangers, and fully resolved, as he was, never to be in love more, yet he could not help feeling confusedly a sort of necessity for it.

In this secret uneasiness, as he was walking one day on the banks of the sea, he saw a lady coming towards him, whose gait and beauty might have passed her off for a goddess, if he had not recollected her to be none other than Eri-gone, the courtesan. He would have avoided her, but she came directly up to him. Alcibiades, say she, philosophy will make a fool of you : tell me, is it time, at your age, to bury yourself alive in these abstruse and melancholy ideas ? Come, come, believe me, be happy now, we shall always have time to be wise. I aspire not to be wise, says he, but in hopes of being happy.—Upon my word, an excellent road to happiness ! Do you think I waste myself away in the study of wisdom ?

wisdom? And is there an honest woman among them more contented with her condition than I am? This Socrates has spoiled you. It is a great pity; but there is still a remedy, if you'll follow my lessons. I have had a design upon you a long time. I am young, handsome, sensible; and I believe I may say, without vanity, as good as any bearded philosopher of them all. They preach mortification—horrid science! come to my school, my doctrine is enjoyment. I have but too well learnt it at my own expence, said Alcibiades, pleasure and ostentation have ruined me. I am no longer that man of splendor and fortune, whose follies have made him so famous; and at present I have no other support than at the expence of my creditors.—Well! and does that make you uneasy? Be comforted, I have gold and jewels in plenty, and the follies of others shall make you amends for your own. You flatter me too much, reply'd Alcibiades, by these obliging offers, but I cannot think of abusing them.—What is all this delicacy about? Does not love make all things common? Besides, who will imagine that you owe any thing to me? You would not be fool enough to boast of it; and I have too much vanity to publish it myself.—I protest you surprize me; for in short you have the character of being avaricious—Avaricious! yes, to be sure; with those whom I don't love, to be liberal to those whom I do. My jewels are, indeed, very dear to me, but you are still dearer. If you have occasion for them, speak, I will sacrifice them to you to-morrow. Your generosity, reply'd Alcibiades, confounds and overwhelms me. I would give you the pleasure of exercising it, if I could shew my gratitude as
a young

a young man ought ; but, not to dissemble, the immoderate use of pleasures has not only ruined my fortune, but taught me the secret of growing old before my time. I believe so, says Erigone smiling, you have been acquainted with so many honourable women ! But I am going to astonish you, a lively and delicate sentiment is all I ask of you ; and if your heart is not ruined too, you have enough to satisfy me. You rally, said Alcibiades—Not at all. If I took Hercules for a lover, I would have him be Hercules ; but I would have Alcibiades love me like Alcibiades, with all that delicacy of calm pleasure, the source of which is in the heart. If in the sensual way, you intend to surprise me, so much the better. I permit every thing, and insist upon nothing. Indeed, says Alcibiades, I am as much charm'd as surpriz'd, and except the uneasiness and jealousy which rivals might occasion—Rivals ! you shall have none but wretched ones, I'll give you my word. Believe me, my friend, women change only from coquetry or curiosity ; and you know very well both the one and the other are exhausted with me. If I did not know mankind, the promise I make might be dangerous ; but in sacrificing them to you, I know what I am doing. After all, there is one sure method of making yourself easy. You have a seat at a little distance from Athens, where we shall not be troubled with impertinent visits. Do you think you could possibly support a *tête à tête* there along with me ? we'll set out whenever you please. No, said he, my business detains me in town for some time ; but if we should come together, must we advertise it ?—As you please. If you chuse to own me, I will proclaim it ; if you chuse it to be a secret, I will be more discreet and reserv'd than

than a prude. As I depend on nobody, and only love you for your own sake, I neither fear nor desire to attract the eyes of the public. Don't make yourself uneasy, consult your heart, and if I am agreeable to you, I shall expect you to supper. Come, let us go to invoke the Gods of pleasure and joy to be witnesses of our oath. Alcibiades took hold of Erigone's hand, and kissing it with transport, at last says he, I have met with love, and my happiness begins from this day.

They arrive at the courtesan's. Every delicacy of the most exquisite kind, which taste could invent to flatter all the senses at once, seemed met together in this delicious repast for the entertainment of Alcibiades. In such an apartment Venus received Adonis, when the loves poured out the nectar, and the graces served them up ambrosia. When I took upon me, says Erigone, the name of one of the mistresses of Bacchus, I never flattered myself with the idea of possessing a mortal more beautiful than the conqueror of India. What do I say? a mortal! no; 'tis Bacchus, Apollo, 'tis Love himself whom I possess, and I am at this moment the happy rival of Erigone, Calliope, and Psyche. Let me crown you then, my young God, with the vine, the laurel, and the myrtle. O may I in your eyes possess all the attractions which the mortals have adored, whose charms are reunited in you! Alcibiades, intoxicated with self-love and passion, displayed all those enchanting talents, which would have seduced wisdom itself. He sung his triumph to the lyre, compared his own happiness to the gods, and thought himself happier than them, as he found he was more amiable and more beloved.

After

After supper, he was conducted into a neighbouring apartment, which was separated from Erigone's. Repose yourself, my dear Alcibiades, said she, leaving him, may love make me the object of all your dreams. Vouchsafe, at least, to make me believe so; and if any other object offers itself to your mind, spare my delicacy, and by a good-natured deceit, repair the involuntary injury you shall be guilty of in your sleep. What, answered Alcibiades, tenderly, am I to be reduced to the pleasures of illusion only? You shall never have any other laws with me, says she, than your own desires. At these words, she retired into her chamber, singing a song as she withdrew.

Alcibiades cried out in raptures, O modesty! O virtue! what are ye, if in hearts which ye inhabit not, pure chaste love is to be found; love, such as it descended from the heavens to animate men yet innocent, and embellish human nature. In this excess of admiration and transport, he got up, and went to surprize Erigone.

Erigone received him with a smile. Full of delicate sensibility, her heart seemed to catch fire only from the desires of Alcibiades. Two months past away in this delightful union, without the courtesan's departing one moment from the character she had assumed; but the fatal day was at hand that was to destroy at once the pleasing delusion.

The preparations for the Olympic games, were the topic of conversation amongst all the youth of Athens. Erigone talked so much of these games, and of the glory of bearing away the prize with so much warmth and vivacity, that she made her lover conceive the design of entering the course, and the hope of a successful triumph.

triumph. But he was determined to please her by surprise.

The day came for the celebration of the games; and Alcibiades left her to appear amongst them. If we were to be seen together at these fights, says he, people would not fail to draw disagreeable inferences; and we have agreed, you know, to avoid even suspicion. Let us go to the Circus separately. We shall meet together when the games are over, and I shall expect you at supper.

The people assemble, and settle to their places. Erigone appears, and attracts the eyes of all upon her. The pretty women behold her with envy, the ugly with indignation, the old men with regret, and the young with universal transport. The eyes of Erigone, however, wandering over the spacious amphitheatre, looked only in quest of Alcibiades. On a sudden, she sees the horses and the chariot of her lover at the barrier. She could hardly believe her own eyes. But soon a youth, beautiful as Love himself, and fierce as Mars, vaults into the chariot. 'Tis Alcibiades! 'tis he himself! The name passes from mouth to mouth. She hears nothing all around her but, that's He! It is Alcibiades, the ornament and glory of the Athenian youth! Erigone turned pale with joy. He cast a look upon her which seemed to be the presage of victory. The chariots are drawn up in front; the barrier opens. The signal is given; the earth resounds under the feet of the horses. A cloud of dust envelopes them. Erigone scarce breathes; all her soul is in her eyes, and they follow the chariot of her lover through loads of dust. The chariots separate. The swiftest gain the advantage; among which number is that of Alcibiades. Erigone,
all

all trembling and pale, offers up her vows to Castor, to Pallas, to Hercules, to Apollo. At length she sees Alcibiades at the head, and only one antagonist by the side of him. At that moment, hope and fear kept her mind in suspense and agitation. The wheels of the chariot seem to turn upon the same axis, and the horses seem guided by the same reins. Alcibiades redoubles his ardour; and the heart of Erigone immediately dilates. His rival encreases his speed, and the heart of Erigone sinks down again. Every struggle, every revolution causes an immediate change in her. The two chariots arrive at the goal; but Alcibiades his antagonist has sprung forward and got the head of him. Immediately the name of Pisicrates of Samos echoes from a thousand voices. Alcibiades, in the utmost consternation, retires in his chariot, hanging down his head, the reins flowing loosely from his hands, and carefully avoiding that side of the Circus, where Erigone, overwhelmed with confusion, covered her countenance with her veil. She thought the eyes of all were upon her, reproaching her for her love to a man who had been vanquished. A general murmur was heard round about her. She looks up to see the cause of it. 'Tis Pisicrates, who brings his chariot up on that side where she sits. A new subject of grief and confusion! But what was her surprize, when the chariot stopping at her feet, she saw the conqueror come down from it, who advances to present her with the Olympic crown! It is to you, Madam, that I owe it, says he, and I come to pay you the due homage for it. Let us conceive, if possible, the various emotions which the mind of Erigone laboured under at this speech. But love was still the conqueror. You owe nothing to me, says she to Pisicrates, blushing;

blushing, my wishes, pardon my frankness, my wishes were not for you. Nevertheless, replied he, the desire of appearing conqueror in your eyes, has acquired me this glory. If I have not been happy enough to engage your interest during the contention, let me at least be happy enough to interest you in the triumph. He then pressed her again, in the most affecting manner, to accept his offering. All the people invited her to it, by their frequent acclamations. Self-love at last got the better of love. She received the fatal laurel; to yield, says she, to the instances and acclamations of the people—but who could believe it? She received it with a pleasant air, and Pisicrates remounted his chariot, intoxicated with love and glory.

As soon as Alcibiades had recovered his first shock; You are very weak, and very vain, said he to himself, to afflict yourself to this excess, and for what? because there is found a man in the world more dexterous, or more fortunate than thyself. I see what it is torments you. You would have been transported, to have conquered before Erigone, and you are afraid you shall be less loved, because you are vanquished. Let me do her justice. Erigone is not of the ordinary kind of women. She will be pleased with the spirit which you have shewn, and as to the ill success, she will be the first to make you blush for your sensibility on so trifling a misfortune. I will go to her with confidence. I can even congratulate myself on this moment of adversity. It is a new trial of her heart, and love prepares me a triumph more flattering than any victory at the course. Full of these comfortable ideas, he repairs to Erigone. He finds the chariot of the conqueror at her gate.

This was a stroke of thunder to him. Shame, indignation, despair, take possession of his soul. Distracted and raging, his steps in wild disorder turn, as it were of themselves, to the house of Socrates.

The good man, who had been at the games, ran up to meet him. Well, says he, so you come to alleviate your disappointment with me, because you have been conquered. Had you triumphed, my young rake, I dare say I should not have seen you. I am not, however, the less obliged to you. I love to receive visits from people in adversity. A mind intoxicated with its own happiness, opens itself wherever it can. The confidence of an afflicted mind is more pleasing and affecting. Confess, however, that your horses did wonders. How then? You lost it but by a single volt. You may boast of having the best horses in Greece, after Pisicrates of Samos, and indeed it is a glorious thing for a man to excel in horses. Alcibiades was so confused, that he did not even understand the raillery of Socrates. The philosopher perceiving the trouble of his heart by the alteration of his countenance, how is this, says he, in a more serious tone, can a trifle, a mere child's play affect you thus? If you had lost a kingdom, I could scarcely view such an humiliation and dejection as you now appear in. Alas! my dear master, says Alcibiades, recovering himself, what a misfortune it is to have sensibility! In the age we live, a heart of marble would better become us. I confess, replied Socrates, sensibility sometimes costs us dear, but it is so good a thing, we cannot pay too much for it: But tell me all that has happened.

Alcibiades

Alcibiades related to him his adventures with the prude, the young lady, the widow, the judge's wife, and the courtesan, who at that moment had forsaken him. What is it you complain of? says Socrates, after having heard him out. It seems to me, that every one of these in her way loved you with the utmost sincerity. The prude, for example, loves pleasure, she finds it in you. You deprive her of it, she dismisses you; and so with the rest. It is their own happiness, never doubt it, which they sought in their lover. The young lady considered you as a husband, whom she might love with freedom and decency. The widow, as a conquest which did honour to her beauty. The magistrate's wife, as an amiable and discreet man, with whom, without danger or noise, her virtue and philosophy might suffer some relaxation. The courtesan, as a man admired, applauded, universally sought after, whom she should have the secret pleasure of possessing alone, while all the beauties of Greece were disputing about the glory of captivating you. You allow then, says Alcibiades, that not one of these has loved me for myself. For thyself! cried out the philosopher, who, my dear child, has put that ridiculous pretension into your head? Love is selfish, none love but for themselves. Friendship, pure as that sentiment is, does it not make its preferences, and found its choice on personal interest? and if you insist on its being disinterested, you may begin by renouncing mine. I am astonished, continued he, to see the folly of self-love, even in those who have the best understandings. I should be glad to know, what is this *self* you desire them so much to fall in love with. Birth, fortune, and

honour, youth, talents, and beauty, are but accidents. Nothing of all these is you, and yet this is all that makes you amiable. The *self* which unites all these charms, is in you only the canvas of the tapestry. It is the embroidery makes it valuable. In loving these qualifications in you, they confound them with you. Don't excuse yourself with making distinctions which cannot exist, and take the result of this mixture, as it is given you. It is a coin, whose consistence is formed by the alloy, and which loses its value in the crucible. I am not sorry that your delicacy broke off your connexions with the prude and the widow, nor that the resolution of Rodope, and the vanity of Erigone, has restored you to your liberty. But I am in concern for Glycerium, and I advise you to return to her.—You can't be in earnest, says Alcibiades, she is a child that only wants to be married.—Well then! do you marry her.—Did I hear right? does Socrates advise me to marry?—Why not? If your wife is discreet and sensible, you will be a happy man, and if she is wanton, or coquettish, you will be a philosopher, and either way you must be a gainer.

SOLIMAN THE SECOND.

A MORAL TALE.

METHINKS it is merry enough to reflect on those grave historians, who pother their brains to find out great causes for great revolutions. I dare say that Sylla's *valet de chambre* could not have forbore smiling, had he heard the different conjectures of politicians on his master's abdication: but Sylla is out of the question.

Soliman the second married his slave, in defiance of the laws of the Ottoman empire. You may imagine, perhaps, this slave to be a perfect beauty, with great genius and refined politics; nothing of all that; here is the fact.

Soliman grew tired in the midst of all his glory. The pleasures of the seraglio, notwithstanding their variety, were grown insipid by being too easily obtained. I cannot bear, said he, to have no other enjoyment but that of a parcel of submissive caressing machines; I hold them all at a very low rate; their listless condescension has nothing flattering, nothing engaging. My delight would be to enslave a heart free and independent.

A sultan's whims are so many commands to his ministers. Considerable sums were promised to whomsoever could furnish the seraglio with European slaves. In a short time there were three introduced, who, like the three graces, seemed to have shared amongst themselves all the charms of beauty.

Majestic and modest features, sweet languishing eyes, a frank open temper, joined to a soul of sensibility characterised the engaging Elmira. The thoughts of being shut up in a seraglio, with the notion of slavery, terrified her almost to death. Soliman found her swooned away in the arms of the women. He drew nigh, she comes to herself; he endeavours with great tenderness to remove her fears, and give her comfort. She raised up her fine large blue eyes, moist with tears, with a languishing look. He gave her his hand, supported her, whilst she accompanied him with a feeble tottering step. The slaves withdrew; and as soon as they were left together, Soliman said, Charming Elmira, it is not my intention to give the least disagreeable apprehension. Forget that you have a master, and only behold in me a lover. The name of lover, as well as that of master, are equally unknown to me, reply'd Elmira, and which I equally dread. I was informed, and I shudder at the thought, that I was to be devoted to your pleasures. Alas! what pleasure can there be in overcoming weakness, and oppressing innocence? Don't imagine that I shall ever submit to the compliances of servitude. The only satisfaction you can possibly taste with me, must be that of shewing yourself a generous protector. Oh! restore me to my fond parents, restore me to my country! and in paying a due respect to my virtue, to my youth, and to my misfortune, be entitled to my gratitude, to my esteem, and perhaps to my regrets.

Such a speech from a slave was quite new to Soliman; his generous soul was moved at it. No, my dear child, said he, banish your fears, I will never have recourse to violence. I am transported with you; my whole happiness will consist in
loving

loving and striving to please you; and yet I would rather suffer the torment of never seeing you again, than a much greater one, that of seeing you unhappy. However, before I set you at liberty, give me leave to try whether it is possible or not to dispel the shocking notion that the name of slave has prepossessed you with. I desire but one month's trial; after which, if you are not disposed to a mutual inclination, I shall take no other revenge of your ungratefulness, but that of giving you back to the ingratitude and treachery of men. O Sir, cry'd out Elmira, with a surprize mix'd with joy, how unjust are the prejudices of my country! and how little are your virtues known! continue to be what you seem at present, and I shall never reckon this day amongst my unhappy ones.

Immediately several slaves appeared with the richest brocades and most precious jewels. Choose what you like, said the sultan, these are only for cloaths, not ornaments, where no embellishment is wanting. Pray do you choose for me, reply'd Elmira, running over the variety of gold and silver stuffs that were presented to her choice. I desired you would not ask my advice, reply'd Soliman, I shall hate, without distinction, any thing, if it was possible, that did not suit your charms. Elmira blush'd; and the sultan remarked that she preferred those colours which were best adapted to set off her particular beauty. It gave him a flattering prospect. The love of being adorned is next to a desire to please.

The probation month, on Soliman's side, passed on with the most respectful gallantry; and on that of Elmira with the greatest complaisance and most delicate regard. She liked him every day more and more, without knowing it. His

visits were at first permitted only after the ceremony of the toilet, to the hour she retired to undress; but in a short time he was admitted both to the undressing and to the toilet. 'Twas there the plan was laid for the amusements of the day, and for those of the next. What one proposed was precisely what the other was going to propose; their only dispute was which stole each other's thoughts first. Elmira, during these playful debates, did not perceive some little inadvertent negligences which her modesty would have been alarmed at. A handkerchief slipped aside, a tucker mis-placed, &c. procured the sultan now and then a pleasure which he took care to disguise. He knew, and it was a great deal for a sultan to know, that it was injudicious to put modesty to the blush; that bashfulness is never more shy than when alarmed, and that they must be tamed before they can be conquered. The more charms he discovered in Elmira, the more his apprehensions encreased at the near approach of that day, which might deprive him of them for ever.

The eve of the fixed decisive day is come. Soliman ordered several chests to be got ready full of the richest stuffs, with the most valuable perfumes and precious jewels of all kinds. He went to Elmira's apartment, followed by the presents. To-morrow, Madam, said he, is the day that I promised to restore you your liberty, if you still regret it. I am come to make good my word, and bid you an eternal adieu. What! said Elmira trembling, is it to-morrow? I had quite forgot it. Yes, 'tis to-morrow, reply'd the sultan, that I am doomed to be the most wretched of mankind. — You are very cruel to yourself then, to have put me in mind of it! — Alas! charming Elmira,

ra, 'tis in your power to make me forget it for ever. I must needs own, said she, that I am moved to see you grieved, that your generous behaviour makes your happiness dear to me; and if to shew my gratitude, prolonging my slavery would.—No, Madam, I am but too well acquainted with the pleasure of seeing you: I am very sensible, that the more I should know of you, the more shocking it would be to part with you. Such a sacrifice would be my death; but I should only make it a more painful one in deferring it. May your country be worthy of possessing you! may those whom you are going to charm be more deserving of you than I am! I only ask one favour, which is to accept of these trifles, as a small token of the most tender and sincere love that you, yes, you yourself are capable of inspiring. No, Sir, said she, with a faltering voice, I accept of none of your presents. I go: 'tis your will. But I shall take along with me nothing of yours but your image, which is engraved in my heart. Soliman fixing his eyes on Elmira's, found them wet with tears. Farewel, Elmira!—Farewel, Soliman! They made one another so many, and such tender farewells, that they ended by resolving never to part so long as they lived. The avenues to bliss which he had cursorily passed with his Asiatic slaves, seemed so delicious with Elmira, that they gave him the most rapturous joy to walk through them step by step. But when arrived at the port of happiness, his pleasures grew as insipid as those he had tasted before; and by becoming easy and unconstrained, became flat and vapid. Their days, which were so full and constantly employed, began to have some intervals. In one of these vacant moments, where complaisance alone retained the sultan, Have you any

objection, said he to Elmira, to be entertained by a slave from your own country, who, I am told, has a very fine voice? Elmira, at this proposal, felt very sensibly the risk she ran; but to constrain a lover that grows tired, is but fatiguing him the more. I can have no objection answered she, to any thing you desire. The slave was introduced.

The singer, whose name was Delia, had a majestic air and shape; her hair was black as ebony, and her skin whiter than ivory; her eye-brows, boldly drawn, arched her sparkling eyes. Soon as she began to sing, her pouting ruby lips discovered two rows of beautiful pearls set in coral. First she sang the victories of Soliman. The hero was elevated at the remembrance of his triumphs. His pride as much as his taste was gratified, when he applauded the accents of her melodious brilliant notes, which made the saloon resound with their harmonious swellings. Delia changed the subject, and sang the pleasures of voluptuousness. She then took her lute, an instrument contrived to display the contour of a beautiful arm, and set off to advantage the neat movements of a delicate hand. Her voice, which she appropriated to the subject, soft and tender, warbled the most moving sounds. The falls and risings of her notes, joined by imperceptible modulations, expressed the raptures of a soul immersed in pleasure, or the relaxation of sated joys. Her notes, now expiring on her lips, now soaring with rapid swellings, expressed by turns the sighs of modesty, and the vehemence of passion; whilst her eyes more than her voice animated the lively descriptions.

Soliman transported with pleasure, greedily feasted his eyes and ears. No, never sure, said he, did sweeter notes proceed from sweeter lips. She who

who can paint pleasure with so much feeling, must inspire it, and partake of it with delight. Ah! what a bliss to respire that harmonious breath, to catch in their very passage those melting sounds formed and animated by love! The sultan was so taken up with these rapturous ideas, that he did not mind that he was beating time all the while on the knee of poor Elmira. She, overpressed with vexation and jealousy, could scarce draw her breath. How happy, said she to Soliman, in a feeble tone, is this finger to have so sweet a voice! Alas! it ought to be the conveyer of the sentiments of my heart. All that she has expressed you have taught me to feel. So spoke Elmira; but Soliman did not so much as listen to her.

Delia altered her manner again, to celebrate the charms of inconstancy. All the most pleasing and interesting scenes that variegated nature could produce were represented in her songs. Imagine the beautiful fluttering fly roving from flower to flower, and the bland zephyrs panting on the opening rose! Hark! she sung, the dove begins to coo, it is constant, but it is dull and pensive. Mind the fickle linnet, its little wings shiver with pleasure, and its sweet notes are raised as a grateful tribute to love. The flowing waters never freeze; a heart always cools by constancy. There is but one mortal on earth that can possibly be loved continually; let him range, and he enjoys the pleasure of making thousands happy. All prevent his wishes, or follow his inclinations. We adore him in our arms, and even love him in those of another. Let him fly, or yield to our desires, every-where he will meet with love, every-where he will leave it behind him.

Elmira

Elmira could stifle no longer her grief and her resentment. She got up and retired; the sultan took no notice of her departure; and whilst she was drown'd in tears, repeating over and over, O perfidious! O ungrateful and unkind! Soliman, charmed with his divine singer, realized with her some of the imaginary scenes she had described with so much lusciousness. The very next morning the disconsolate Elmira sent him a note indited by love and grief, which put him in mind of his promise. O! 'tis just, said the sultan, let her return to her own country loaded with my benefactions. Poor thing! she really loved me: and I cannot say that I have behaved to her as I ought.

The first moments of his passion for Delia were a downright intoxication; but soon as sober reflection had dispersed its fumes, he found that she had more petulance than sensibility; and seemed rather more eager to receive pleasure, than fond of giving it: in short, much fitter than the sultan to have a seraglio of her own. Sometimes to entertain his illusion, he desired Delia to sing him one of those songs which used to delight him. But the enchantment was broke, and Delia's voice was no longer the same. The raptures it was wont to raise dwindled insensibly, by being often heard, almost to an inattention; when an unforeseen event erased it for ever.

The prime minister of the seraglio came and informed the sultan, that the wild ungovernable vivacity of one of the European slaves was not to be controuled in any shape. She is sure to do every thing she is forbid. She makes a joke of our threats, and answers our expostulations with the most provoking raillery, or with immoderate bursts of laughter. Soliman, who was too great
and

and too reasonable a man to look upon the government of the seraglio as an affair of state, was curious to see this young madcap. As soon as she perceived Soliman, Well! heaven be praised, said she, here is a human figure. You are, I suppose, the sublime sultan, whose slave I have the honour to be? pray oblige me so far as to drive away that old, horrid, ugly creature that shocks my sight. Soliman could scarce keep his countenance at this fine beginning. Roxelana, said he, (it was the name they had given her) have more respect, if you please, for the minister of my will and pleasures; you are as yet unacquainted with the customs of the seraglio; 'till you are full informed of them, learn to moderate yourself, and obey. A fine compliment, truly, replied Roxelana. *Obeys*! pray is that a sample of Turkish gallantry? you must be vastly loved, to be sure, if you address the women in that strain! *Have more respect for my will and pleasure!* You have then wills of your own, O heavens! and what wills? if they are of a-piece with those of your minister! an old good-for-nothing amphibious monster, that shuts us up as in a sheep-fold, constantly upon the watch with his frightful glaring eyes, as if he was going to devour us. And is this the confident of your pleasures, and the guardian of our chastity? I must do him the justice to own, that if you give him money to make yourself hated, he certainly earns his wages. We can't stir a step but he scolds; he even forbids us our mutual visits and taking a walk together. I suppose by and by he will be for weighing us out the air, and measuring us a portion of light. I wish you had seen how he fumed with rage one evening that he found me alone in these solitary gardens! is it by your orders that he interdicts our going in? are you

you afraid that it will rain men? and if some should happen to fall from the clouds, where would be the harm? it is a miracle that heaven ought in justice to perform in our favour.

Whilst Roxelana thus ran on, the sultan was gazing with the greatest surprize on the vivacity of her looks, and the roguish play of her countenance. By Mahomet, said he to himself, never was such a sweet, pretty physiognomy formed in Asia; Europe has the advantage of us there. Roxelana had nothing of what is called beautiful; no regularity in her features; but she altogether had that charming *Je ne sçais quois*, a hundred times more agreeably inticing than beauty. A look that spoke, lips like the opening rose, an arch witty smile, an easy genteel shape, and a little cock-up-nose; all which set off her freakish behaviour in so pleasing a light, that she put the Grand Signior's gravity almost out of countenance. But in these situations your great folks have a characteristic recourse of their own; *silence*. And Soliman, not knowing what answer to make, took the benefit of his power, and hid his embarrass under the veil of majesty. The prime eunuch desired to know his pleasure in regard to this little impertinent slave. You see, answered the sultan, she is quite unexperienced; you must make great allowance for a child.

The figure, manner, and character of Roxelana made such an impression on Soliman, that he was agitated, even in his sleep, with the thoughts they had raised in his mind. As soon as he was awake, he sent for the chief of the eunuchs; methinks, said he, thou art no favourite at Roxelana's court? go, and to ingratiate thyself, let her know that I shall come and drink tea with her. At the minister's appearance, Roxelana's women hurried

hurried to wake her. What would the old monkey have with me? said she, rubbing her eyes. I am come, answered the eunuch, by command of his sublime highness, to kiss the dust beneath your feet, and acquaint you at the same time, that he intends to come and drink tea with the delight of his soul.—Get you gone with your speech. My feet have no dust under them, and I don't drink tea so early in the morning.

The eunuch retired without replying, and gave an account of his message. She is in the right, said the sultan, what business hadst thou to have her waked? Thou dost every thing wrong. As soon as it was broad day in Roxelana's apartment, he went to her. You are angry with me, said the sultan; your rest was disturbed, and I am the innocent cause of it. Come, let us be reconciled; follow my example; I have already forgot all you said to me yesterday.—So much the worse for you; I told you a great many good things; I see my frankness is disagreeable, but you must grow used to it. Don't you think yourself very happy to find a friend in a slave? Yes, I say, a friend that interests herself for you, and who will teach you how to love. Ah! why have not you travelled into my country? It is there that love is in its element; all life! all tenderness! and wherefore? Because it is free. Sentiments must be inspired, not commanded. Marriage with us is far from slavery, and yet a husband beloved is next to a prodigy. Whatever bears the name of duty, is vexatious to the mind, damps imagination, cools desire, and blunts that edge of self-love which creates a poignancy, and gives a relish to love. Now if it be so difficult to love one's husband, how much more so to love one's master? especially if he has not the cunning to hide the chains

chains which he has given. I shall make it my study, replied the sultan, to soften your servitude; but on your side it will be your duty—Duty! why now there again; nothing but duty! take my advice, and get rid of those mortifying terms; they are out of place in the mouth of a gallant man, who has the honour to converse with a pretty woman.—But Roxelana! do you forget who I am, and who you are?—Why, you are powerful, and I am pretty; so we are upon a par. It might be so in your country, replied haughtily the sultan; here I am master, and you are a slave.—Yes, I know very well that you bought me, but the robber that sold me could not transfer to you any other rights than what he had; those of violence and rapine; in a word, the rights of a thief; and you are a man of too much honour to take the advantage of them. After all, you are only my master, because my life is in your hands; but I am no longer your slave, if I can despise life; and really such a one as is led here is not worth preserving. Ah! what a shocking idea have you started! exclaimed the sultan, do you take me for a barbarian? no, my dear Roxelana, I shall make no other use of my power but to endeavour to make us both happy. You set out then, said she on a very wrong footing; for example, to what purpose all these keepers? these black, filthy, deformed, nauseous creatures? are they the smiles and graces that are here the attendants on love?—These keepers are not for you alone; I have five hundred women, over which our laws and our customs oblige me to have a watchful eye.—And pray tell me to what purpose those five hundred women?—Why, nothing more than a vain ostentation attached to the dignity of a sultan.—But how do you employ them

them all? for you don't lend them to any body. No, it was inconstancy that introduced the custom. A heart that has no real attachment, must have change to be amused. Nothing but a true and sincere passion can make a lover faithful and constant, which I never was 'till I saw you. Let not the number of these women give you any uneasiness; they will only serve to adorn your triumph. You will find them all studious to please you, and you will see me assiduous to please you, and you alone. Upon my word, said Roxelana, with a compassionate air, you deserve a better fate. What a pity it is that you are not a private man in my country! I might, perhaps, have listened to you; for, after all, it is not you that I hate; 'tis all these creatures that surround you which create my aversion; for really you are much more likely than a Turk has a right to be; you have something of the Frenchman in you, and, without flattery, I have loved such as are not to be put in competition with you. You have loved! cried out the sultan with great emotion.—O! no to be sure! what should have hindered me? would you have me to have been virtuous all my life, to cease to be so with you? Upon my word, you Turks are very odd folks! —And you have not been always virtuous! O heavens! what do I hear? I am betrayed, I am on the rack. Perish the traitors that have imposed upon me. Excuse them, replied Roxelana; the poor people are not to blame; wiser than them have been deceived; and besides, where is the great harm? Why don't you restore me my freedom, if you think that I am not worthy of the honour of slavery?—Yes, yes, I shall restore you to your liberty, which you have already made so good an use of. At these words,
the

the sultan retired in a fury, saying, I was afraid that little cock-up nose had been guilty of something more than indiscretion.

This imprudent confession of Roxelana almost distracted him. First he will have her turned away; and then she must be shut up; now he will have her brought before him; and presently, no, let me not see her. In short, the great Soliman did not know what he said. Sublime lord, represented the eunuch, why should a trifle give you so much vexation? one more, one less, is it so wondrous an affair? besides, who knows but what she owed to you was only an artifice to be sent back.—What dost thou say? ah! ah! is it possible? It must be so. Thou hast opened my eyes. No-body confesses such sort of truths. It is a trick, a piece of cunning. O the deceitful hussy! but I'll countermine her, and dissemble likewise. Go and tell her . . . that I desire to sup with her to night . . . No, don't go; order the finger to come hither, she is the properest person to be my ambassadress.

Delia was charged to employ all her art to gain Roxelana's confidence. What, said she to the finger, when she understood what was her drift, young and handsome as you are, he sends you with such a message! and you have the weakness to condescend to his desire; you are not worthy of being my compatriot. I see very plainly that they have spoiled him, and that I must take the trouble of teaching this Turk how to behave. I will send him word that I keep you to supper; he shall make reparation for his impertinence.—But, Madam, he may take it ill.—He take it ill! I should be glad to see him find fault with what I like.—He seemed to expect, Madam, a *tête à tête*.—A *tête à tête*! did he

he so? no, no, we are not come to that yet; he has a long way to go before we shall have any thing to communicate in private.

The sultan was as much surprized as vexed to find that there would be a third. However, he repaired betimes to Roxelana's apartment. As soon as he appeared, she accosted him with an air of freedom and familiarity, as if they had been on the most intimate footing. This is, said she, very obliging to come and sup with us——I hope, Madam, you have no objection.—You must needs own, Soliman, that I am a good friend, indeed. Come, salute the lady; very well. Now thank me; softly! I don't like you should dwell so much upon your gratitude. This is as it should be; I am really surprized at his progress. I have given him as yet but two lessons, and you see how he is improved! I don't despair of making him quite a Frenchman.

Do but think of the amazement of a sultan, and that of such a sultan, the conqueror of Asia! to find himself treated like a school-boy by a slave of eighteen years old. She was all suppertime of the most gay and lively humour imaginable. Soliman was delighted; he asked her several questions concerning the manners and customs of Europe. One description came fast upon another; our prejudices, our follies, our ridicules, all were taken off and exposed. Soliman thought himself in Paris. What a charming spirit of mimicry! cried out the sultan; can any thing be more agreeable? From Europe she fell upon Asia; the picture was much stronger. The surly haughtiness of the men, the imbecility of the women, the dulness of their society, the maukish gravity of their amours, nothing escaped

escaped her notice; tho' one would have thought she could have had but a cursory view of their manners. The seraglio had its turn, and Roxelana began by felicitating Soliman, for having been the first that took it in his head to secure the virtue of women, by the entire annihilation of manhood in the blacks. She was beginning to expatiate on the honour this epocha of his reign would do him in history; but he desired her to drop the subject. Well, said she, I perceive that I take up those moments which Delia would employ much better. Entreat her to give you one of those airs, which, 'tis said, she sings with so much taste and spirit. Delia did not wait to be pressed. Roxelana seemed charmed; she whispered Soliman to give her a handkerchief. He gave her one, without dreaming of her design. Madam, said she to Delia, presenting it to her, it is from the sultan that I offer you this handkerchief, you well deserve it. So she does, said Soliman, provoked to the highest pitch, and giving his hand to Delia, retired with her.

I must own, said he, as soon as they were alone, that this little giddy, whimsical creature quite confounds me; you see what a tone she assumes; and I have not the power to lessen it, or even to be angry. In short I doat upon her; but how to make her comply with my wishes I know not. Sir, replied Delia, I fancy I have found out her real character. Authority and constraint will never do. Nothing but extreme neglect, or the greatest attention and gallantry, will have any effect. Neglect, indeed, may pique her; but I am afraid it is too late; she knows you love her; she will have a secret satisfaction in seeing the uneasiness you impose upon yourself; very sure that you will be glad to return, and strive to make it
up.

up. Besides, such means are not troublesome, but very disagreeable, for if you should chance to shew the least condescension, it would be all to begin again. Well then, said the sultan, let us try what gallantry and fair means can do.

From that day forth, it was a study to vary the different entertainments and diversions in the seraglio prepared for Roxelana; which she looked upon as a thing that ought to be, and received them accordingly, without taking them for herself, without any seeming pleasure, but with an obliging unconcerned tranquillity. The sultan asked her, now and then, how she liked these plays, these concerts, these amusements?—I like them well enough, but still there is something wanting—What?—Why men and liberty.

Soliman, vexed and nettled, had recourse again to Delia. Upon my word, said the sinner, I can't tell what will move her without she has ambition, and is fond of fame and honours. Tomorrow you give audience to the ambassadors of your allies; may not I accompany her to see the ceremony, without our being seen? Do you believe, said the sultan, that it would make any impression on her? I hope it will, answered Delia, the women of her country love shew and grandeur. You delight me, cried Soliman! yes, my dear Delia, if it succeeds, I shall be indebted to you for my happiness.

After the ceremony was over, which Soliman had ordered on purpose to be extremely splendid and magnificent, he went to see Roxelana. Go, said she to him, get you gone, and let me never see you more. The sultan remained motionless with amazement. Is it thus, continued she, that you pretend to love? Glory and honour, the only blessings fit to move a soul like mine, are all reserved

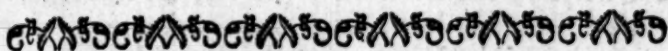
reserved for you alone; whilst shame and oblivion, the most grievous of woes, are allotted for me; and you would have me love you! I hate you worse than death! The sultan pretended to take this reproach for mere pleasantry. I am quite serious, said she, if my lover was possessed only of a poor hut, I would share it with him, and be content; he enjoys a throne, and I will partake of that throne, or he is no lover of mine. If you do not think me worthy to reign over the Turks, send me back into my own country, where every pretty woman is a sovereign, aye, and much more absolute than I should be here, for they reign over hearts. What then, reply'd Soliman, in the most tender and obliging manner, the empire over my heart is not sufficient? No, it is not; I'll have nothing to do with a heart that has pleasures that I am not a partner in; don't let me see or hear any more of your trifling diversions: Amusements for children. I must have and will have ambassadors—But, my dear Roxelana, you talk wildly, or you dream sure.—And pray what is there so extravagant in my desiring to reign with you? am I of a figure to disparage a throne? And do you think that I should have less dignity than you in assuring my subjects and allies of my protection? I believe, reply'd the sultan, that you can do nothing but what is graceful; but it is not in my power to satisfy your ambition; and I desire that you will think no more of it.—Think no more of it! oh, I promise you that I shall think of nothing else. I shall constantly dream of crowns, scepters, and ambassadors: She was as good as her word. The next morning she had already fancied the materials and form of her diadem; there was nothing left undetermined but the colour of the riband which was to bind it on. She
ordered

ordered the richest stuffs to be brought for her choice to make her coronation robes; and as soon as the sultan appeared, she desired his opinion on what she was about to choose. He did all he could to banish this whim from her head; but the least contradiction plunged her into a profound melancholy, out of which there was no drawing her but by soothing her folly. Then she became all life and spirits. He took the opportunity of these moments of gaiety to talk to her of his love; but she, without minding what he said, spoke to him of politics. She had already prepared the answers she was to make to all the addresses she must of course receive on her coming to the crown. Nay, she had even conceived projects to new regulate the state affairs throughout the dominions of the grand seignor. She would have vineyards planted, and opera houses erected. She was resolved to suppress the eunuchs, because they were good for nothing; and to shut up all jealous fools, who were the bane of society. She would have all those who were intrusted with money affairs turned out, because sooner or later they must of course become rogues. These whims diverted the sultan for a little while, but in the mean time he was inflamed with the most passionate love, without any hopes of being made happy; for on the least suspicion of violence she became exasperated, and talked of nothing but poison and daggers! and after all, Soltiman did not find that there was so much unreasonableness in Roxelana's ambition. Is it not very hard, thought he, that I alone, I that am the sovereign, must be debarred the happiness of joining my fate to that of a woman I love and esteem? All my subjects may take as they like, and

as they please, a lawful spouse. When by a law, as whimsical as unjust, I am the only one for whom marriage is prohibited. Thus argued love, but policy soon silenced it. He determined then in the most tender manner to shew Roxelana the reasons of his not complying to her desire. It would be my greatest happiness, said he, to make you happy; but our manners——What are they to the purpose?——Our laws, our customs——They are what you please to make them——And then the priests——What in the name of goodness have they to do with it?——The Janissaries! the people!——All nonsense! it is no concern of theirs; will they be more or less unhappy because I am your spouse? You have but little love, if you have so little resolution. In short, she wound him up to her purpose; he was ashamed of being so timorous. He sent for the Musti, the grand Visier, the chief Justice, the Janissaries of the land and sea forces: He told them, that he had carried the glory of the crescent to the utmost of his abilities; that he had established the power and the repose of the empire on the surest foundation; and he desired, as a reward for his labours, that he might enjoy the same privilege as the meanest of his subjects. I don't know by what law, said he, which is certainly none of our great prophet's institution, the sweets of the nuptial bed are prohibited to your sultans, by which interdiction I am reduced to live with slaves that I rather despise than love; but I am resolved to break thro' the unreasonable restraint, and marry a woman I adore. Prepare my subjects for this wedding: If they approve of it, I shall look upon their approbation as a mark of their gratitude; but if they dare to murmur, tell them it is my will

will and pleasure. They received the sultan's orders with a respectful silence, and the people followed the example.

Soliman, transported with love and joy, led Roxelana to the mosque, and whilst he conducted her thither, Is it possible, said he to himself, that a little cock-up-nose can subvert the laws and constitution of a powerful empire !



THE SCRUPLE.

H E A V E N be praised ! says Belisa, when she was laying aside the mourning for her husband ; I have fulfilled a véry troublesome and disagreeable duty. It was high time it should be at an end. To see one's self at the age of sixteen delivered up to a man, whom one knows nothing of ; to pass the best days of our lives in uneasiness, dissimulation, servitude ; to be the slave and victim of a passion which we inspire, and cannot partake of it. What a trial for virtue ! I have undergone it, and am now free at last. I have nothing to reproach myself with, for indeed I never loved my husband, but I pretended to love him, and that is much more heroic. I have been faithful to him in spite of his jealousy. In a word, I have mourn'd for him. This is, I think, extending the goodness of the mind as far as it can go. At length, restored to myself, I depend upon no will but my own, and I never began to live till this day. Ah ! how my heart would be all in a flutter, if any body should happen to please me ! but let me coolly consider,

VOL. I.

D

before

before I engage my heart, and, if possible, neither run the risque of ceasing to love, nor ceasing to be loved. Cease to be lov'd! Oh, that is a difficult matter, says she, looking in her glass, but to cease to love is still worse. How can people pretend to a passion which they cannot feel! I should never accomplish it. To leave a man after we are engaged to him, is a greater hardness than I pretend to. And then the complaints afterwards, the despair, the noise of a quarrel, all this is terrible! Let me love, since heaven has made me with a sensible heart; but let me love all my life long, and not flatter myself with these transient inclinations, and capricious fancies, which are so often mistaken for love. I have time enough to chuse and make the trial. The only method to avoid all surprize, is to form a clear and precise idea of love. I have read that love is a passion, which of two souls make one, which penetrates at the same time, and fills them one with the other, which abstracts them from every thing, and is to them in the stead of every thing, and which makes their mutual happiness their sole study and desire. Such, no doubt, is love: and it will be very easy for me, according to this idea, to distinguish in myself and others the illusion from the reality.

She made her first experiment upon a young magistrate, who had become related to her by the division of her husband's fortune. The president of S—— with an agreeable person, an improved understanding, a sweet temper, was plain in his dress, easy in his manner, and modest in his conversation. He did not pretend to be a connoisseur in equipages, or fripperies. He neither talked of his horses to the ladies, nor of his intrigues to the men. He had every qualification

ification becoming his rank, without ostentation, and all the agreeable requisites of a man of the world, without being any way ridiculous. He was the same at court and in company: Not that he pretended to dictate at an entertainment, or railly when he was to hear causes. But as he was without affectation, he was without disguise.

Belisa was struck with such extraordinary merit, he had gained her confidence, he obtained her friendship, and under that name the heart goes a great way. Belisa, having now settled her husband's affairs, Will you permit me, one day, says the president, to ask one thing of you in confidence? Do you intend to continue free, or shall the sacrifice of your liberty make still one more man happy? No, Sir, says she, I have too much delicacy in me, ever to make it any person's duty to live only for me. That duty would be a very delightful one, replied the gallant magistrate, and I much fear, that without your consent, more than one lover will impose it upon himself. O, with all my heart, says Belisa, let them love me without being obliged to it. That is the most flattering of all homages.—Yet, madam, I cannot believe you are a coquette.—Oh! you would do me injustice if you did, for I detest coquetry—But to wish to be loved, without loving again—And who told you that I shall not love? people seldom form such resolutions at my age. I will neither constrain, nor be constrained, that is all.—Very well, you would have the engagement cease, where the inclination ends.—I would have them both be eternal, and for that reason would avoid even the shadow of restraint. I feel myself capable

pable of loving all my life long in liberty, but, to speak the truth, would not answer for its continuance two days in slavery.

The president plainly saw that he must work upon her delicacy, and content himself with being on the footing of a friend. He had the modesty to return to that, and from that time, every thing that love has most tender and affecting, was put in practice to win upon her. He succeeded. I need not tell you by what degrees Belisa's sensibility was every day more affected; it is sufficient to know, that she was in that situation, where discretion, in equipoise with love, wants only a slight effort to turn the balance. They were come to this point, and they were *tête à tête*. The eyes of the president, inflamed with love, devoured the charms of Belisa; he squeezed her hand tenderly. Belisa trembled, and could scarce breathe. The president solicited her with the passionate eloquence of desire. Ah! president, says she at last, can you be capable then of deceiving me? At these words, the last sigh of modesty seemed to escape from her lips. No, Madam, says he, it is my heart, it is love itself which has spoken from my mouth, and let me die at your feet if—As he fell at the feet of Belisa, his knee came upon Pompey's paw, the young widow's favourite lap-dog. Pompey howled with the pain. Lord! Sir, how strangely awkward you are? cried Belisa, with an emotion of anger. The president blushed, and was disconcerted. He took Pompey into his lap, kissed the foot he had hurt, begged him a thousand pardons, and desired him to solicit forgiveness in his behalf. Pompey, recovered from his pain, returned the president his caresses. You see, Madam, he has a tender heart, he forgives me;
it

it is a fine example for you. Belisa returned no answer. She was fallen into a profound reverie, and a fixt gravity. He would at first fain have taken this gravity for mere playfulness, and was going to throw himself at her feet to appease her. Pray, Sir, get up, said she to him; these liberties displease me, and I don't know that I have given any encouragement for them. Conceive the astonishment the president was in! He was so confounded for two minutes, he could not utter a single word. What, Madam, said he at last, is it possible that so trifling an accident should raise your anger?—Not at all: but I may, without anger, be displeased that any one should throw himself at my feet. That is a situation which only becomes happy lovers, and I have too much esteem for you to think you dare pretend to be one. I don't see, replied the president with emotion, why a hope founded on love, should render me less worthy your esteem. But pardon my presumption, Madam, if I ask you, since love is such a crime in your eyes, what kind of sentiment is this you have expressed towards me?—Friendship, Sir, friendship, and I earnestly beseech you to keep to that.—I beg your pardon, Madam, I could have sworn it had been something else; but I perceive I was mistaken.—That's very possible, many others are mistaken as well as you. The president could not bear such strange capriciousness any longer. He went away in absolute despair, and was never recalled.

The moment Belisa was alone; was I not going to do a very foolish thing? said she with indignation. I have seen that instant, when my weakness had like to have made me yield to a man whom I did not love. They may well say

we know nothing less than ourselves. I could have sworn that I adored him, that there was nothing in the world which I was not disposed to sacrifice to him. It happens that he hurts my dog without intending it, and this vehement love gives place to anger. A little dog touches me more than him, and I don't hesitate a moment to take the part of this small animal, against the man in the world whom I thought I loved most! Is not this a very lively passion, exceeding solid, and wonderfully tender? Thus it is we take ideas for sentiments. Our brain is heated, and we fancy the heart is inflamed, from thence we go on to commit all sorts of follies; the illusion ceases, disgust succeeds, we must then undergo the tiresomeness of being constant without love, or change with indecency. O my dear *Pompey*, what do I not owe to you? It is you who have undeceived me; without you, I should, perhaps, at this moment have been overwhelmed with confusion, and torn to pieces by remorse.

Whether *Belisa* did or did not love the president, (for these sort of questions turn only on the equivocation of terms) it is certain, that on the strength of saying she did not love him, she convinced herself of it, and a young officer soon confirmed her in her persuasion.

Lindor, from being one of the pages, had just got a troop of horse. The freshness of his youth, impetuosity of desire, the levity and giddiness, which are all graces at sixteen, and follies at thirty, made this young man of quality, who had the honour of being related to her husband's family, agreeable in the eyes of *Belisa*. *Lindor* was very fond of himself, and not unjustly; he knew that he was well made, and of a charming figure. He said so sometimes; but he laughed

laughed so heartily after he had said it, and when he laughed discovered so charming a mouth, and such fine teeth, that these simplicities were pardonable at his age. He mingled, besides, such noble and lofty sentiments with the boyishness of self-love, that, all together, nothing could be more engaging. He was resolved to have a pretty mistress, and an excellent horse. He often looked at himself in the glass when he was going through the Prussian exercise. He desired Belisa to lend him the *rose-coloured Sopha*, and asked her if she had read *Folard's Polybius*. He waited impatiently for spring, that he might have an elegant suit in case of a peace, or make a campaign if it should be war. This mixture of frivolousness and heroism is, perhaps, the most seducing thing in the world, in the eyes of a woman. A confused idea, that this pretty creature, who trifles at the toilet, who is enamoured of himself, who admires his own person, will in two months time, perhaps, throw himself in the face of a battery, upon the enemy's squadron, or make his way, like a grenadier, up a mined breach, gives to the delicacy of the fine gentleman an air of the marvellous, which raises admiration and tenderness; but this absurdity suits only military gentlemen, a piece of advice which I give by the way to the fops and *petits-maitres* of all conditions.

Belisa then was sensible to the natural and lively graces of Lindor. He had entertained a passion for her from his first visit. A young page is impatient to fall in love. My dear cousin, says he one day, for so he called her on account of their relationship, I ask of heaven but two things, to make my first campaign against the English, and with you. You are a simpleton, said she to

him, and I advise you to desire neither one nor t'other. One will happen, perhaps, but too soon, and the other will never happen at all.—Never! that is boldly said, my pretty cousin, but I expected this answer. It does not at all confound me. Come, I'll lay a wager before my second campaign, you will leave off being cruel. At present, when I have nothing for myself but my age and my person, you treat me like a boy, but when you shall hear them say, he was at such an action, his regiment made an attack upon such an occasion, he distinguished himself, he took a port, he has escaped a thousand dangers. Then your little heart will flutter with fear, with pleasure, and, perhaps, with love. Who knows if I were wounded, for example, oh! that is very affecting. As for me, if I was a woman, I should like to have my lover wounded in battle. I would kiss his wounds. I would find an infinite pleasure in counting them. My dear cousin, I will shew you mine, you will not be able to hold out.—Go, you young madcap, do your duty like a gallant man, and don't fright me with these horrid presages that set me all of a trembling—See, did I not tell truth? I make you tremble before-hand. If the idea alone so affects you, what will the reality do? Come, come, my pretty cousin, you may trust yourself to me. Will not you advance me somewhat upon the laurels I am going to gather?

Such fooleries as these happen every day. Belisa, though she affected to laugh, was not the less sensibly touched, but that vivacity which made so great an impression upon her, prevented Lindor from perceiving it. He had neither understanding nor attention enough to observe in her the gradations of sentiment, and make a proper

per advantage of them. Not but he was as ready, and as enterprising as politeness requires, but a look intimidated him, and the fear of displeasing weighed as much with him as his impatience to be happy. Thus two months passed away in little trifling attempts, without any decisive success. However, their mutual love grew stronger and stronger, and weak as Belisa's resistance was, she grew tired of it herself, when the signal of war gave an alarm to their loves.

At this terrible signal their labours are all suspended, one runs away without waiting an answer to his billet-doux. Another fails in an assignation which would have crowned all his wishes. It creates a general revolution in the empire of pleasure.

Lindor had hardly time to take his leave of Belisa; she had reproached herself a hundred times, for the cruelties which she had not committed. This poor young man, said she, loves me with all his soul; nothing can be more natural or more tender than his manner of expressing his sentiments; his figure is a model to paint by, he is beautiful as the day. He is giddy indeed, but who at his age is not so? but he has a most excellent heart. He has nothing to do but to amuse himself. He would find few very cruel. Yet he sees only me, he breathes only for me, and I treat him with an air of haughtiness! I know not how he supports it. I confess, if I was in his place, I would soon leave this rigid Belisa to stupify herself with her virtue. For, in short, prudence sometimes is a mighty good thing, but, prudence for ever! While she was making these reflections, news came that the negotiations for peace were broke off, and that the officers had orders

orders to join their respective corps without delaying a single moment. At this news all her blood froze in her veins. He is going then, said she, pierced to the very heart, he is going to fight, he is going to die, perhaps, and I shall never see him more. Lindor arrives in his uniform: I come to take my leave of you, my dear cousin, I am going. We shall soon face the enemy. One half of my wishes is already fulfilled, and I hope, at my return, you will grant the other. I love you heartily, my sweet cousin, do you sometimes think of your little cousin; he will return faithful to you, he gives you his word. If he is killed indeed, he will not return, but they shall send you his ring and watch. You see this little enamelled dog. That shall trace out my image, my fidelity, my tenderness, and you will sometimes kiss it. In saying these words he smiled tenderly, and his eyes were wet with tears. Belisa, who could no longer contain her own, said to him in the most sorrowful manner, you leave us very gaily, you say that you love me, is this the parting of a lover? I thought it had been a dreadful thing to separate one's self from what one loves. But this is no time to reproach you, come, embrace me. Lindor, in a transport of joy, made use of this permission even to licentiousness, and Belisa was not displeased. And when do you set out? says she.—Immediately.—Immediately! What! don't you sup with me?—It is impossible.—I had a thousand things to say to you.—Say them quickly then, my horses wait.—It is very cruel in you to refuse me one evening.—Ah! my dear cousin, I would give you my life, but my honour is concerned. My hours are counted; I must arrive to a minute. Consider if there should be an action and I not there,
I should

I should be undone. Your little cousin would be unworthy of you. Suffer me to deserve you.

Belisa embraced him again, bathing him with tears. Go, says she, I should be distracted to bring any reproach upon you. Your honour is as dear to me as my own. Be wise, expose yourself no more than your duty requires, and return such as I now see you. You don't give me time to say any more, but we will correspond with each other. Adieu—Adieu, my dear cousin.—Adieu, adieu, my dear youth.

Thus amongst us gallantry is the soul of the point of honour, as that is the soul of our armies. Our women have no need to go before our warriors to send them back to battle, but the contempt with which they treat a coward, and the favour they shew to men of courage, render their lovers bold and intrepid.

Belisa past the night in deep sorrow. Her bed was bathed with tears. Next day she wrote to Lindor; every thing of the most affecting kind, which a tender and delicate soul can inspire, was expressed in her letter. O ye, who are so badly educated! who teaches you to write so well? does nature take a pleasure to humble us by giving you your revenge?

Lindor, in his answer full of spirit and irregularity, expressed by turns the two passions of his soul, military ardour and love. The impatience of Belisa left her no rest till she had received this answer. Their correspondence was established, and continued uninterrupted half the campaign, and the last letter they wrote, was always the warmest, the last they expected, always the most desired. Lindor had, to his misfortune, a jealous confidant.

You

You are absolutely bewitched, says this friend to him, with the passion you inspire. If you did but know where all this leads. I know women. Will you make one proof upon this lady you are so fond of? Write to her, tell her you have lost an eye; I'll lay you a wager she will advise you to have patience, and do all in your power to forget her. Lindor, quite sure of his triumph, consented to this proof, and as he did not understand lying, his friend dictated the letter. Belisa was almost out of her senses. The image of Lindor presented itself to her mind, but deprived of one eye. That great black patch made him impossible to be known. What pity it is, saith she, sighing; his two eyes were so fine! mine met them with so much pleasure! love painted himself there with such charms! But he is now more interesting to me, and I ought to love him more than ever. He must be disconsolate, he shudders at the apprehension of appearing less amiable to me. Let me write to him to encourage him, to comfort him, if possible. This was the first time Belisa was ever obliged to say to herself, *let me write to him*. Her letter was cool, spite of all her endeavours. She perceived it, tore it, writ it over again. The expressions in it were strong enough, but the turn was forced, and the style laboured. That black patch in the room of a fine eye, clouded her imagination, and chilled all her sentiments. Ah! don't let me flatter myself, says she, tearing her letter a second time, this young man is no longer the object of my affections; an eye lost has set my soul into confusion. I wished to play the heroine. I am, alas! but a weak woman; let me not affect sentiments beyond my character. Lindor does not deserve to be deceived. He reckons upon a gene-

generous and sensible soul; if I am not sufficiently so to love him still, I ought to be enough so to disabuse him. His being deceived will give me uneasiness. I am disconsolate, says she, in her letter, and much more to be lamented than you. You have lost only one charm, and I am going to lose your esteem, as I have lost my own. I thought myself worthy of loving you. I am now no more so. My heart flattered me that I was superior to all events; a single accident has changed me. Be comforted, Sir, you will always have wherewith to please a reasonable woman, and after the humiliating confession I make you, you will no longer have any reason to regret me.

Lindor was distracted at reading this billet. The *Sir* seemed, particularly, a glaring affront. *Sir!* said he. Ah! the base woman! her little cousin, *Sir!* The man with one eye, *Sir!* He went to look for his friend. I told you so, my dear friend, said the confidant. Now is the time to be revenged, if you had not rather wait the end of the campaign, for the pleasure of surprising your heroine. No, I will put her to confusion this very day, said the unfortunate Lindor. He then wrote to her that he was extremely happy to have made this trial. That *Sir* had still two eyes, but that those eyes should never more look upon the most ungrateful of all women. Belisa was undone, and from that moment took the resolution of renouncing the world, and burying herself in the country. Let me go vegetate, says she, that is all I am fit for.

In the neighbourhood of the village, there was a kind of philosopher, in the flower of his age, who after having enjoyed every thing in town for six months in the year, came for the other

other six months to enjoy the pleasures of solitude: He made his visits to Belisa. You have, said she to him, the reputation of being a wise man, pray, what is your plan of life? Plan, Madam, I never had any, answered the count of P. I do every thing which amuses me, look out for every thing which I love, and carefully avoid every thing that is dull and disgusting—Do you live by yourself? do you see company?—I see our shepherds sometimes, to whom I teach morality; I dispute with the labourers, who are better taught than all our learned doctors: I give a ball to the prettiest young country nymphs in the world; I make lotteries for them of ribbands and laces, and I marry off those who seem the most forward in love. What, says Belisa, with astonishment, do these folks know any thing of love? Better than we, Madam, better than we a hundred times! They are as fond as turtles, they give me an appetite to love.—You will grant however, they have no delicacy in their love.—Delicacy! Madam, alas! that is the refinement of art, they have the instinct of nature, and that instinct makes them happy. They talk of love in town, they make it only in the country. They have in sentiment what we have in imagination. I have tried, like other people, to love and be beloved in the world; caprice, convenience, put every thing into order or confusion. An alliance is but a rencontre. Here inclination makes the choice. You will see in the entertainments and diversions which I give them, how their simple and tender hearts seek each other without knowing it, and attract each other by turns. You give me a picture of the country, replied Belisa, I did not expect. Are these the people so much to be pitied!—They were, Madam,

dam, some years ago, but I have found out the secret of making their condition much better.—Oh, you shall certainly tell me that secret, interrupted Belisa with great eagerness, I want to make use of it too.—It is in your own power. It is this, I have forty thousand livres a year. I spend ten or twelve thousand at Paris, in the two seasons that I pass there, eight or ten at my house in the country, and by this oeconomy, I have twenty thousand livres to throw away on my exchanges.—And what exchanges do you make?—I have grounds well cultivated, meadows well watered, orchards well fenced and well planted.—What then!—What then! Lucas, Blaise, Nicholas, my friends and neighbours, have grounds which lie fallow, or are grown poor; they have not wherewithal to cultivate them. I change mine for theirs, and the same extent of ground which scarce maintained them, after two crops, makes them rich. The land which was barren in their hands, becomes fertile in mine. I choose the seed, the plant, the manures, the culture fit for it, and when it is in good condition, I make a new exchange. These are my amusements.—Excellent! cried Belisa, then you understand agriculture?—A little, Madam, and I improve myself in it. I oppose the theory of the learned, to the experience of the husbandman. I endeavour to correct the errors in the speculation of the one, and the practice of the other. 'Tis an amusing study.—I believe it, and would gladly pursue it. But you ought to be adored in these villages, these husbandmen ought to consider you as their father.—Yes, Madam, we have a regard for each other.—I am exceeding happy, my Lord, in having your lordship for my neighbour. Let us see each other frequently I entreat you: I would
fain

gain imitate your labours, follow your method, and become your rival in the hearts of these people.—Madam, you will have no rivals wherever you desire to please, and even where you do not.

Such was their first interview: and from that moment, Belisa became a downright country-woman, entirely taken up with husbandry, talking with the farmers, and reading nothing but systems of agriculture. His lordship invited her to one of the feasts he gave them upon holidays, and presented her to his tenants, as a new benefactress, or rather as their sovereign. She was witness of the love and respect they had for him. These sentiments became catching; they are so natural and so tender! It is the sublimest of all praises, and Belisa was touched even to jealousy, but, how far was that jealousy from hate! I must confess, says she, they have reason to love him. Independent of his good actions, nobody in the world is more amiable. From that day, a most intimate, and, in all appearance, a very philosophical acquaintance was established between them. Their conversations turned only on the study of nature, on the means of restoring youth to our old mother earth, who exhausts herself for her children. Botany instructed them in the knowledge of those herbs, which were salutary or noxious to cattle. Mechanics gave them the powers to raise water at small expence, upon the dry hills, and to ease the animals destined to labour of part of their fatigue. Natural history taught them to calculate the oeconomical advantages and inconveniencies arising from the choice of their beasts for labour. Practice confirmed or corrected their observations, and they made their experiments in small, to make it less expensive.

The

The holiday came round, and their diversions suspended their studies.

Belisa and the philosopher mixed together at the dances of the villagers. Belisa perceived with surprize, that not one of them took any very particular notice of her. You will suspect me, says she to her friend, of a strange piece of coquetry, but I will conceal nothing. I have been told I was handsome an hundred times. I have, besides, the advantage of dress greatly above those country folks, yet I do not see in any of these young fellows eyes any marks of emotion at the sight of me. They think only of their companions, they have no souls but for them. Nothing is more natural, Madam, says his lordship, desire never comes without some beam of hope, and these good folks think you beautiful, only as they do the stars and the flowers.—You surprize me, says Belisa, is it hope that makes us sensible?—No, but it directs our sensibility.—We love then but with the hope of pleasing?—No, certainly, Madam, and without that who could help loving you? A philosopher can then be a gallant, answered Belisa with a smile.—I speak truth, Madam, but am no philosopher. But if I deserved that name, I should only have the more sensibility. A true philosopher is a man, and glories in being so. Wisdom never contradicts nature, but when nature is in the wrong. Belisa blushed, the count was confounded, and they were for some time with their eyes rivetted to the ground, without daring to look up, or break silence. The count would fain have resumed the conversation on the pleasures of the country. But their discourse was confused, disjointed, and without connexion. They no longer knew what they had said, much less what they were going to say. They parted

-at

at last, Belisa in a deep reverie, and he absolutely at a loss, and both afraid that they had said too much.

The youth of the villages round about assembled the next day, to present them with a feast. Gaiety made all the ornament. Belisa was in raptures, but the turn of it surprised her. The composer had made the songs in praise of Belisa and the count, and the couplet closing, with saying, Belisa was the elm, and the count the ivy. He did not know whether he should silence them, or take the thing in jest. But Belisa was offended. I beg your pardon, Madam, says the count, as he was conducting her home. These honest folks speak what they think, they know no better. I would have made them hold their tongues, but I could not resolve to make them unhappy. Belisa did not answer a word, and he went away overwhelmed with sorrow for the impression this little trifle had made upon her.

How unhappy am I, says Belisa, after the count was gone. Here again is a man I am going to love. It is so palpable, these very rustics have found it out. It will be with him as with all others, a slight flame, a mere spark. No, I will never see him more. It is dishonourable to inspire a passion, when we cannot be susceptible of it ourselves. The count would give himself up to me, without reserve, and in the utmost confidence. I should make a very worthy man unhappy, if I should break with him. He sent the next day to know if she was at home.—What can be done? if I refuse him to-day, I must see him to-morrow. If I persist in my resolution of not seeing him, what will he think of my alteration? what has he done to displease me? shall I suffer him to think I distrust either him or myself? After

ter all, how am I sure that he loves me? and if he does love me, am I obliged to love him? I will make him hear reason, I will give him my real character, he will esteem me the more. I must see him. The count comes.

I am going to surprise you, said she to him. I had some thoughts, nay, I was on the very point of breaking with you.—With me! Madam, and for what? what is my crime?—Being amiable and dangerous. I tell you I came hither for ease and retirement; that I dread nothing so much as love; that I am not made for a solid engagement; that I have the most wavering, inconstant soul in all the world; that I despise transitory pleasures, and that I have not a sufficient fund of sensibility to enjoy durable ones. Such is my character, I give you warning of it. As far as friendship goes, I can answer for myself, but you must not think of love; and that I may have nothing to reproach myself with, I will absolutely neither inspire it, nor be inspired with it. Your sincerity, Madam, encourages mine, answered the count. You shall know me too in my turn. I have conceived for you, without the least suspicion or intention, a tender and violent affection; the happiest thing that could have happened to me, and I give myself up to it, spite of all you can say. You think yourself light and inconstant; no such thing. I know the turn of your mind better than you yourself do.—No, Sir, I have been already tried, and I leave you to judge. She then related to him the history of the president, and of the young page.—You loved them, Madam, you loved them, you discourage yourself without reason. Your anger against the president was without consequence. The first emotion is always for the dog, the second for the lover,

ver, so nature has ordained it. Your coolness towards the page had not been more durable. The loss of an eye always produces that effect, but we get the better of it by little and little. As to the continuance of a passion, I must be ingenuous with you. Who, but a madman, expects impossibilities? I desire ardently to please you; I shall make it my happiness, but if your inclination for me should, perhaps, grow weaker, that would be a misfortune indeed, but no crime. What! because there is no pleasure without alloy, must we deprive ourselves of every thing? Must we renounce every thing? No, Madam, we must stick to the good, and pardon in ourselves and others what is less good, or actually bad. We live here an easy, undisturbed life; love is wanting, which may still adorn it, let us try it. If it forsakes us, friendship yet remains, and when vanity is out of the composition, the friendship which survives love, is still more engaging, more intimate, and more tender. Indeed, Sir, says she, this philosophy is very strange—Quite simple and natural, Madam, I could make romances like another, but life is not a romance. Our principles, like our sentiments, should have their foundation in nature. Nothing is easier than to fancy miracles in love, but all those heroes exist only in the heads of authors; they say what they please, let us do what we can. It is a misfortune, without doubt, to cease to please, it is a much greater to cease to love, but the height of misfortune is to pass our life in fear and self-denial. Trust to yourself, Madam, and deign to trust to me. It is hard enough not to be able to love always, without condemning ourselves never to love at all. Let us imitate these swains; they don't examine whether they shall love

love a long time, it is enough for them to feel that they love. I surprise you! you have been educated in the country of chimæras. Believe me, you have a good natural disposition; return to truth; make nature your guide; she will conduct you better than art, which loses itself in the void, and reduces sentiment to nothing by the mere force of analysing.

If Belisa was not persuaded, she was much less confirmed in her first resolution, and when reason begins to totter, 'tis easy to overthrow it. Belisa yielded without any trouble, and never did mutual love make two hearts more happy. Resigned one to the other in full liberty, they forgot the world, they forgot themselves. All the faculties of their souls united in one, formed a mere tourbillon of fire, of which love was the centre, and pleasure the fuel.

Their first ardour was decreased, and Belisa was alarmed, but the count confirmed her. They returned to their country amusements. Belisa found nature was more adorned, that the sky was more serene, and the fields more delightful. The sports of the villagers pleased her more than ever, they recalled a pleasing remembrance. Their labours grew more interesting to her. My lover, said she to herself, is the god who encourages them, his humanity, his goodness, are like the rivers which water and give fertility to the meadows. She loved to talk with the labourers about the blessings which this mortal, whom they called their father, scattered amongst them. Love made every thing personal and interesting which they said of him. Thus she passed all the summer in loving him, admiring him, in seeing him make others happy, and making herself happy also.

Belisa

Belisa had proposed to the count to pass the winter out of town, and he had answered her, smiling, I will. But when the country began to be barren, when it was impossible to walk when the days were rainy, the mornings cold, and the evenings long, Belisa perceived, with much anxiety, that weariness had taken possession of her soul, and she longed to return to Paris. She made this confession to her lover with her usual frankness.—I told you so beforehand, you would not believe me.—The event but too much justifies the ill opinion I had of myself.—What event is this?

Ah ! my dear count, since I must tell you, I grow tired, I love you no longer.—You grow tired ; that's very possible, answered the count, smiling ; but you do not love me less ; it is the country you don't love.—Alas, Sir, why would you flatter me ? All times, all places, and all seasons are agreeable with those we love.—Yes, in romances, as I told you before ; but not in nature.—You may say as you please, insisted Belisa ; I know that two months ago I should have been happy with you in a desert.—Without doubt, Madam, such is the violent intoxication of a rising passion ; but this first fire lasts not long. The happy love grows calm and moderate. The soul, less agitated from that time, begins to be sensible to impressions from without. We are no longer alone in the world. We feel the necessity of amusement, and the pleasure of dissipation.—Ah, Sir, to what then do you reduce love ?—To truth, my dear Belisa.—To nothing, my dear count ; to nothing ! You cease to be the only object, therefore I cease to love you.—No, my dearest, I have not lost your heart, and I shall be dear to you for ever.—Dear to me for ever !
yes,

yes, surely, but how?—As I would wish to be.—Alas! I perceive my own injustice too much, even to hide it from myself.—No, Madam, you are not unjust. You love me sufficiently, and I wish not to be loved more. Will you be more difficult than me?—Yes, Sir; I will never forgive myself for growing weary of the most amiable man in the world.—And I, Madam, and I who boast of nothing, I grow weary sometimes of the most adorable woman in the world, and yet I forgive myself.—What, Sir, do you ever grow weary of me?—Of you yourself, and still I love you more than my life. Will that content you?—Come, Sir, let us return to Paris.—Yes, Madam, with all my heart; but remember the country shall see us again in May.—I don't believe it.—Indeed it will, and more fond than ever.

Belisa, at her return to town, indulged herself in the winter amusements with an insatiable eagerness. The count, on his part, gave himself up to the torrent of the world; but not with so much vehemence. Belisa's ardour abated by degrees. The suppers seemed tedious; she grew heartily tired at the play. The count took care to see her but seldom: his visits were short, and at such times when she had all her adorers about her. One day she whispered him softly, What do you think of Paris?—Every thing amuses; nothing attacks me.—Why do not you come to sup with me?—You have seen me so much, Madam: I have discretion; the world has its turn; I shall have mine.—You still believe then that I love you?—I never talk of love in town. What do you think of the new opera, Madam, says he, raising his voice? and the conversation became general.

Belisa

Belisa always compared the count with whatever she fancied most advantageous; and the comparison turned to his favour. Nobody, says she, has that ingenuity, that simplicity, that consistency of character. Nobody has that goodness of soul, and dignity of sentiment. When I think upon our past conversations, all our young people seem to me to be no better than well-taught parrots. He may very reasonably doubt that one can cease to love him, after we have known him. But no, 'tis not the opinion he has of himself; 'tis the opinion he has of me, gives him this confidence. How happy should I be were it properly founded!

Such were the reflections of Belisa; and the more she found her inclination for him return, the easier she was in herself. At length the desire of seeing him again became so strong, that she could not resist writing to him. He came to her immediately. What, Madam, says he, *à tête-à-tête*. You will expose me, to make your lovers all jealous.—No person has a right to be so, replied Belisa; and you know that I have only friends. But, you, an't you afraid of spoiling some new conquest? I never made but one in my life, returned the count. She expects me in the country, and I shall visit her this spring.—She would be much to be lamented, if she were in town; you are so taken up, she would run the risque of being neglected.—She would amuse herself there, Madam, and not think of me.—A truce with all this circumlocution, says she: Why do I see you so seldom, and for such short times?—That you may enjoy, at your liberty, all the pleasures of your age.—You can never give me too much of your company; my house is yours, Sir; consider it as such, you will make me happy;

happy ; I request it, and have a sort of right to demand it.—No, Madam, don't demand that ; I should be exceedingly unhappy to displease you ; but permit me not to see you again till the return of the summer. This obstinacy piqued her very much. Go, Sir, says she, with some indignation ; go seek pleasures I shall have no part in. I have deserved your inconstancy. From this day she had not a moment's rest. She enquired after all his proceedings. She sought after him, and followed him with her eyes in the public walks, and at the theatres. The women whom he visited became odious to her. She continually questioned his friends about him. The winter seemed intolerably long. Tho' as yet 'twas but at the beginning of March, some fine days having appeared, I must, says she, confound him, and justify myself. I have been in the wrong hitherto ; he has the advantage over me, but to-morrow he shall not. She sent to desire his company, every thing was ready for their departure. The count arrives. Lend me your hand, says Belisa to him, to help me into my coach. Where are we going then ? Madam, says he.—To grow weary of ourselves in the country. The count was in raptures at these words. Belisa, at the motion of his hand, which had supported her, perceived the transport and exstasy she had occasioned. O, my dear count, says she, pressing his hand, which trembled underneath hers, what do I not owe to you ! You have taught me to love ; you have convinced me I was capable of it ; and, instructing me upon my own sentiments, have exercised the most agreeable violence against me. You have compelled me to esteem myself, and think that I am worthy of you. Love is now content. I have no longer a SCRUPLE left, and I am happy.



THE FOUR PHIALS.

OR, THE ADVENTURES OF

ALCIDONIS OF MEGARA.

THERE is nothing I regret more than the loss of Fairy-land. It furnished a lively imagination with a source of innocent pleasures and the most decent manner of forming agreeable dreams. We therefore find that the oriental climates were formerly stocked with Genii and Fairies. The Greeks looked upon them as mediating powers between men and the Gods; witness the familiar Dæmon of Socrates, and witness the fairy who protected Alcidonis, as I am going to relate.

The Fairy Galanta conceived a friendship for Alcidonis even before he was born. She presided at his birth, and endowed him with the gift of pleasing, without any determined inclination to love. His youthful days were but the unfolding and bringing forth to light the graces and talents that were allotted him. He was turned of fifteen when his father, one of the most worthy and richest citizens of Megara, sent him to Athens to perform his exercises; and whilst he embraced him, taking his leave, My dear son, said he, you are now entering into the world, where you will meet with numbers of wild, unthinking youths, who are constantly throwing out injurious aspersions on the women. But don't believe them; they only affect to despise them, because they could not make them despicable. As for my

my part, to begin with your mother, my virtuous spouse, I have always remarked in the fair sex a delicacy of sentiment, a candour, a sincerity, that few men are capable of. Follow my example ; make choice of a prudent woman, of an even temper, sound judgment, and whose virtue is meek and sociable. You may find such every where. My consent will soon confirm your choice. I am a good father, and only wish your happiness.

Alcidonis, full of these lessons, arrived at Athens. His first visit was to Seliana, to whom he was recommended. Seliana had been both pretty and handsome; she was still handsome, but her prettiness was on the decline. After the first compliments paid, pray what has brought you hither? said an ancient captain, who was Seliana's husband, and an old friend of his father's. Is it at your time of day to be shut up amongst a parcel of women? The Circus, the Piræus, those are the schools for youth, and not that frivolous circle of what is called the polite world. It makes me almost mad when I see a young man arrive at Athens. 'Tis to Sparta they ought to go.

Alcidonis was a little disconcerted at this blunt speech; but Seliana took the young man's part with some warmth. 'Tis so like you, said she to her husband, Sparta, the Circus, the Piræus! and pray what is to be learned in those famous schools? To fight, and to grow rich, answered he surlily.—To grow rich, mighty gentleman-like indeed! To fight, very agreeable to be sure! The first is unworthy of the ambition of a man of honour, and the second is learned but too soon.—Not so soon as you imagine, Madam, not so soon, truly. I very much question when one has past one's youth dangling after the women, whether

ther a man is fit either for a good officer, or a good soldier.—And I think there is nothing so unbecoming, so disagreeable as a man that has never learnt any thing but how to fight. Would not one imagine, if you are to be minded, that you are come into the world to cut one anothers throats? Peace has its virtues and its talents as well as war; and you are not supposed to be always at the head of a regiment!—That is the evil, by heavens, the very evil! I would have it forbid on pain of death to quit the standard even in time of peace.—What, Sir, would you not leave us a single man?—O! you will have enough; there are so many useless beings in the state!—Mighty well, you would reduce us then to take up with the scum and riff-raff of the republic? The women are very much obliged to you, and ought to return you thanks.—They may keep their thanks to themselves.—I would have you to know, Sir, that we women are as public-spirited as yourself; we generously give up all those disagreeable figures, those frightful objects, those bloody-minded creatures, that take no delight but in killing one another, and who are really good for nothing else.—And you will reserve, I suppose, all the pretty fellows that are fond of life?—To be sure.—’Tis mighty well compromised. Methinks you should solicit the Areopagites to issue out a decree for that purpose. You see, Sir, that my wife is crazy. I quit the place, ’tis more than I can bear, by Hercules, Madam; ah! why was I doomed to be your husband? Such things happen to nobody else but me. So saying, he went out stamping, and slapt the door after him.

This

This is, said Alcidonis, an odd specimen of matrimonial comfort; pray, Madam, have you often such scenes?—Why, yes, answered she, reservedly, whenever I have company.—And when you are by yourselves?—He will scold then sometimes, but not quite so loud.—How came you to marry him?—As people generally do, for reason and conveniency. Yet with all his faults, he is one of the best men in the world. Whenever he becomes tiresome, I contradict him; he grows out of patience, and takes himself away. After all, you may do with him what you please. I advise you to shew him great regard; his friendship is not to be neglected; you will find it very necessary. Have you many recommendations here?—Only to some few of my father's particular friends.—So much the better, we shall see one another the oftener. 'Tis for your sake I desire it. The most prudent person in the world stands in need of a guide. Will you be so kind as to be mine? My husband or me you may choose,—Madam, my choice is already made. Thus passed the first visit.

When the husband returned, What a strange man you are! said Seliana to him, you have frightened the young man.—Whom I suppose you were about to tame.—I understand you, Sir; I shall immediately order the doors never to be opened to him.—No, Madam, No: that is not the thing; don't imagine that I am jealous; it is rather too late to begin acting that part. I never was when you were young; there is no great likelihood of my growing so now that you are arrived to the years of maturity.—These are your genteel polite speeches! but I am so used to them! Remember, however, that you ought to return the visit to your old friend's son.—I shall

wait upon him no doubt. I think I know the world, and am not to be instructed in the article of good breeding.

Next day he went to see Alcidonis; and after the first civilities, they resumed their former conversation. So then, said the old captain, you are going to plunge into the effeminate manners of our Athenian youth? I don't doubt but that my wife has disposed you to it. But be upon your guard, I don't mean in respect to her; her time is over, heaven be praised! Beware of such as are like her. They are the most dangerous of syrens. There is no depending on any commerce with them. They engage with you, deceive you, and quit you without decency. One would think that they had a patent to make mankind their dupes, and that we were merely formed to be the tools of their will and pleasure. If it be as you say, reply'd Alcidonis, the women of Athens are very unlike those of Megara.—They are the same at Megara as they are here and every where else. I see you take after your old father. The good man never swore but by his chaste better half. It was out of complaisance to him that she dressed and saw company; out of devotion that she used to be shut up with one of Minerva's young priests, and merely for the sake of meditation that she passed the evenings with him in a little snug house which he had prepared for that purpose. The credulous man had an implicit faith in her virtue.—And with great reason, Sir. I must beg of you to pay a little more regard to the memory of my mother.—Your mother! why there again! was not your mother a woman? and would you have one cast out of the common mold? I have known a great many, and yet I never found an exception to the general rule,

rule, but in my extravagant wife, who to be sure is strictly virtuous; and that is owing to my great care in making her so, even in her own despite. But I never could pluck up all the roots of coquetry which nature or example seems to have implanted in them almost from their birth. I would lay a wager that Seliana is still woman enough to endeavour to seduce you, only for the pleasure of turning you into ridicule. Depend upon it you won't be the first she has made half distracted with her whim. It was her diversion formerly to play those kinds of frolics, and then she was ready to burst her sides with laughing whilst she made me the recital of them. Happily she grows old, so that the danger is not so great at present.

Alcidonis passed part of the night ruminating on what he had heard. The women of Athens, thought he, are much to be feared! He fell asleep, forming the resolution to avoid them. Galanta, the Fairy, appeared to him in his dream. There is nothing, she seemed to say unto him, that resembles man more than woman. The good and the bad that is related of them is true in particular, and false in general. One should neither trust to every thing, nor mistrust every thing. Frequent the women, but be cautious how you engage with them. I have not given you any decided character on purpose to render you more tractable and complying to theirs. Whoever is peremptory, is unsociable. You will be a charming man if they say of you, *One may do what one will with him.* But it is not sufficient to please, you must also know how to love, and love to a proper degree, neither too much, nor too little. There are three sorts of love, passion, fancy, and inclination. The whole

art of making one's self happy, consists in placing properly those three shades. To effect which, here are four Phials of different virtues, as well as of different colours. Would you be desperately in love, drink of the purple Phial; of the rose-colour, if you would only gently dip into love and pleasure; of the blue, when you would enjoy it without inquietude, without intoxication; and of the white, to return again to your natural state. At these words the Fairy dissolved in air, as the vapours of a vision.

Alcidonis awoke, delighted with his dream. But what were his surprize and joy when he found the four Phials in reality close by him! I shall not be in a hurry, said he, to try the experiment, but reserve them for an occasion. He arose, returning the Fairy thanks, and went to Seliana, whom he found alone.—You have seen my husband, I suppose, said she? Did not he exclaim against gallantry?—Prodigiously.—He told you a thousand monstrous things of the women?—It is very true.—I hope he excepted me?—No, he did not even except you, only upon the article of chastity. Poor man!—He is fully convinced of your fidelity; but he pretends that you are so much the more dangerous to be frequented, for that you turn into ridicule, without mercy, all those that are so unfortunate as to fall in love with you.—This is the way he treats me! He deserves that. But no, I have a regard to myself.—He boasts that your virtue is all owing to him; 'twas he that made you what you are.—He!—Yes, he himself, nay, and in spite of you.—In spite of me! that is too much. I shall make him know whether I am to be made virtuous whether I will or not.—I own, that if I was in your place. . .

I could

I could wish to have my revenge for his insulting my mother.—Your mother!—Yes, he had the assurance to tell me, that my father's forehead was not exempt from the common badge of matrimony; and that he was the only husband in the world free from this misfortune.—O! the wretch! he has much to boast of indeed! but, as I said before, I have a regard for myself, tho' he does not deserve the least. I am no coquette, Sir; and since he obliges me to it, I must, for my own justification, confess that I have a heart susceptible of tenderness; perhaps as much, if not more, than any other.—And what use do you make of that heart?—Alas, none at all; but you don't imagine that I reserve it for his sweet face? I keep within the bounds of virtue for my own quiet; not to be exposed to the capriciousness, the inconstancy and ingratitude of men. I feel that if ever I should love, it would be passionately, and I should expect a reciprocal return. How could it be otherwise? I dare not flatter myself so much as that; there is nothing so fickle, vain and inconstant as is love in your sex. You have indeed your inclinations, your amours; but you know nothing of true love, that divine passion of the soul, those transports of rapture, which are both its delight and excuse.—Madam, I know where such love as you paint, those extatic raptures which you are entitled to, I know, I say, where they are to be had, and if I was sure of a sincere return, I would take a good dose. Seliana could not forbear smiling at Alcidonis's simplicity (for the Fairy made him appear with that air of innocence and ingenuity so agreeable to the eyes of a coquette.) No, she reply'd, the heart does not inflame all on a sudden; and how is it possible to be in love, when we

scarce know one another?—Very well, Madam, I must wait then; we shall be better acquainted by to-morrow.—What, shall I see you to-morrow?—To-morrow, if you please.—Let it be in the afternoon; you understand me? for I would spare you the fatigue of my husband's company; we shall be by ourselves, and at liberty; I shall talk reason to you.

Alcidonis did not fail going to the rendezvous, with his Phials in his pocket. Seliana received him in a most alluring plain negligée. This is indeed, said Alcidonis, as he saluted her, the undoubted privilege of beauty; the less adorned, the more charming. Seliana affected a blush. You are sensible, said she, how very dangerous you are with your pretended simplicity: I find one may be taken in and deceived.—Deceived, Madam! I never deceived any body.—And so you intend to begin with me?—No, upon my honour.—Why then those flattering speeches, those tender wishful looks!—You are handsome, and I have eyes; they only express what I feel; there can be no flattery there.—Your great tranquillity and indolence are indeed a plain proof that you have no design upon me.—Ah! if you would give me leave, you would find that indolence quickened in a moment!—And so you wait for my permission, to become quite enamoured?—'Tis very true; I only wait the word of command.—Upon my word you are very comical, with your cool determined resolution.—'Tis because I am very sure to perform whatever I promise.—What if I should be so weak, as to shew some inclination to excite in you a passion for me?—That very instant you shall be adored, you may depend upon it.—Alcidonis, I plainly perceive that you don't know how far you are engaging yourself,

yourself, nor how much I am capable of exacting.
 —O! exact, Madam, exact; the more the better. My heart shall do honour to your commands, and I shall love you in whatever mode you please.—Would you love then even to folly?
 —Folly let it be; 'tis all equal so me; raise it to the highest pitch, or to what degree you choose.
 —Your *Maivieté* is delightful! Love me then, as much as you can.—That will be to distraction. But I hope you will keep pace with me.—I hope I shall.—Oh that hope is not enough.—Why then, I am very certain I shall.—I am satisfied, and I flatter myself you will be so likewise.—Where are you going?—I am yours in an instant.

Poor credulous Alcidonis withdrew, and drank up the purple elixir to the very last drop. He returned with sparkling eyes, beating heart, and faltering voice. Away supineness; vivacity advance. His speech was rapid, tho' irregular; full of warmth and meaning. The words did not occur fast enough to express his meaning. Some broken accents, a vehemence in his deportment, and something still stronger enforced the energy: his in short, his eloquence was so very pathetic, that it quite overturned Seliana. She is agitated, animated, and confused; she hardly knows how to account for so strange a disorder. She would fain endeavour still to doubt, fear, and hesitate. Vain attempts! her heart melts, her eyes are all on fire, and her reason is extinct. One would have thought, the very moment after, that she had drank of the same Phial.

Two months passed over in transports scarce to be restrained. The husband was continually bantering Alcidonis, for his great assiduities about his wife. Poor dupe, said he to him, you would not believe

believe me ; you are taken in, and I am glad of it. Continue to dangle after her ; to be sure your time is well employed. Alcidonis took revenge, in the best manner he could, of his insulting raileries ; but his passion was no longer seconded with the same ardor. Seliana's began to droop every day more and more. Seliana was enough for him, but he was not enough for her. She was obliged to call in other assistance, to enliven and divert her ; and return into the world from which she had retired. Alcidonis grew uneasy. He perceived, with the utmost vexation, that she was amused with every thing, whilst he was taken up with her alone. He became pensive, perplexed, jealous ; in short, so troublesome, that Seliana resolved to get rid of him.

'Tis very true, said she, that I did love you ; I was out of my senses ; my reason is returned. Strive to follow my example. All things pass away, even love itself. Mine, I own, is lessened ; you are displeased at it ; it is quite gone, and you grow desperate. So much the worse for you ; 'tis no fault of mine ; I can't love longer than I can.—How ! O false, ungrateful, perfidious woman !—As much as you please of that. Call me as many names as you will, if it gives you any relief.—O heavens ! how I am treated !—As a child that one forgives.—Have you forgot the solemn oaths you made to love me to the last moment of your life ?—Rash oaths, that signify nothing. Fools are they that make them, and greater those that rely upon them. Would you believe a man that swears, when he sits down hungry to table, that he shall always have the same appetite ?—The same appetite ! What an idea ! Is that the delicacy of your sentiments you boasted of so much ?—Another piece of
non-

nonsense. We disown the empire of our senses, at the very time we are enslaved by them. I am a woman; I love as other women do: did you expect that nature should perform a miracle in your favour? Alcidonis, at this discourse, began to tear his hair for mere vexation. What are you doing? said she; do you imagine that you will be more lively, or more beloved, when you have made yourself bald? Mind what I tell you, Alcidonis, I shall always retain for you a very compassionate friendship.—Cruel Seliana, is it friendship, is it pity, that I require?—You must be reduced to it, for I feel nothing more for you. Pray who are most in the wrong, those that cease to love, or those who cease to please? The question is not decided yet, nor will it be in a hurry. In the mean time, follow my advice; bear with your disappointment, and take a courageous resolution.—It is already taken, perfidious! It is taken, said he, as he withdrew to drink one of his Phials: I need not inform you that he had recourse to the white.

On a sudden, the agitation of his senses subsided, and his reason returned. It is very true, said he, accosting Seliana with a composed tranquil air, that I was a great simpleton to have put myself in a fury. We were lovers, and now we are friends. It is right to taste of every thing in life. Passion is a fit; when it is over, we are well again. One is not obliged to frequent one another any longer than one likes; and, what is more natural, if you are tired with one object, than to look out for another. You have loved me as much as was in your power; and you would have been very unwise to have suffered a burdensome constancy. Enjoy, Madam, the right your beauty gives you of multiplying your conquests.

I am

I am very happy to have been one of the number. It is just that we should have our turn. I wish you a great deal of pleasure.

Seliana was as much surprized as piqued at the coolness of his adieu. She would have him be comforted, but not so soon, nor so easily. This resolution was unaccountable. All considered, she was persuaded that his affected tranquillity was but vexation in disguise; and she did not fail to inform some of her acquaintance, that the poor young man was almost in despair, that he had frightened her terribly, and that it was with much ado that she had prevented his laying violent hands on himself.

The next day he supped with the voluptuous Alcippus, in company with the prettiest women in Athens. The purple Phial, said he to himself, is empty; but it is no great loss, for may I die if I would taste a drop, tho' the Fairy should fill it again. As soon as he beheld all those young beauties, now is the moment of fancy, the time, thought he, of pleasurable enjoyment; he drank up the rose-coloured Phial, and immediately his eyes and his desires wandered from object to object, without fixing on any.

Chance had placed him at table next to a charming creature, with beautiful fair hair, sweet languishing blue eyes, with an extreme modest meek countenance. He was very much struck with her. But on the other side of him sat a most delightful beauty, with fine brown hair, whose bloom and vivacity were ravishing. He would be very well satisfied with this, but then he liked that; in short, he would have preferred the fair, had it not been for the *je ne sçais quoi* that inclined him to the brown. The *je ne sçais quoi* determined his choice. He shewed for her
all

all the eagerness of love and gallantry. She received his addresses with an air of indifference, as a homage that was her due. Alcidonis was piqued at it; for fancy, as well as passion, grows stronger by resistance. Animated with the desire of pleasing, he was the delight of the whole company. Corinna, his charming brown, plainly saw that the other ladies envied her her conquest; which made it the more valuable; and certain looks of tenderness raised great hopes in the heart of her new lover.

The hour of retiring was come; Corinna took her leave, and he followed her. What do you intend to squire me, said she, taking his hand, which he presented to her? I am very sensible of the great sacrifice you make me. He protested that he made her none at all.—You must excuse me there; I carry you off before all the pretty women of Athens; methinks 'tis a triumph I ought to be proud of.—I had only a glimpse of them; they seemed to me to be well enough.—Well enough! you are very sparing of your praises. Would you say that Cleonida is well enough? Those fine large eyes, those regular features, that majestic shape. She looks a goddess.—So she does, the august Juno.—Now you are wicked! And what do you think of Amanta? That air of voluptuousness, that attracting indolence which seems to beckon pleasure?—It is just so that I would paint an occasion neglected.—Neglected! O! that is cruel! I won't repeat it, lest it should become a proverb. I hope you will be less severe on the timorous and simple air of ingenuity in Cephisa; that blooming complexion, that languishing look, that mouth which dares not smile, and which is so beautiful when it does. What do you say to all this?—Why I
say

say that all this wants a soul.—And would not you be glad to communicate yours to her?—I own that if I had not seen you, I should have given her the apple.—Dear me! what could she have done with it? There is nothing so cold, so insensible, so indolent as Cephisa—For which reason I only just cast my eyes upon her.—I must ask your pardon there; for when supper was almost over, I caught you looking at her with fixt attention.—’Tis true, I was admiring her as a fine model in wax.—Fine model as much as you please, but the world says, that the model stands in great need of a drapery.

Whilst Corinna was running over all the objects of her jealousy, they arrived at her house. Won’t you walk in? said she, it is not late. Alcidonis desired no better. The Fairy that gave him a satyrical turn with Corinna, had her view; for the most flattering of all compliments to a pretty woman is to talk slightly of those who might set up for her rivals. The Fairy knew what she was about.

I am impatient, said Corinna, to know your real thoughts of me; I insist upon your telling both the good and the bad.—The bad! you can have nothing bad; and if you had, have I been long enough acquainted with you to find it out? ’Tis all enchantment, all illusion that surrounds you. Such a charming aspect, such a penetrating vivacity might even screen deformity, and make it pass for beauty. I behold you, I am delighted, transported, almost distracted; that is all. ’Tis witchcraft, folly, weakness, whatever you please, but so it is, and you may with one single word make me the most happy or most wretched of men. Why, there is no contradicting what you say, answered Corinna; for
what

what can be more foolish, more idle, than to behold you in that supplicating posture? You have but just seen me; you love me, if I may believe you, and you take the liberty at once to tell me so. How do you know whether I deserve the good opinion you have of me? How do you know but that I am otherwise engaged?—Madam, I know nothing. Perhaps you are the most fickle and deceitful of your sex. That beautiful outside, adorned with all the gifts of nature, may cover, for aught I know, an insensible soul. I am afraid it is so. But, however, I am embarked, and must run the hazard; and was the danger still greater, it is not in my power to draw back.—I perceive by this specimen of your character all that I have been told of it. Ah! 'tis you who are the most dangerous of mortals; 'tis you, Alcidonis, that of all mankind I ought to avoid being in love with.—Why so? What have you been told?—That you are a man of vehement passions, and whoever is vehement is intolerable. You give yourself up without reserve; you plunge headlong into whatever you undertake as your fancy leads; your love is all madness, and you expect to be loved in the same mad manner. If one should chance not to be so violently transported as yourself, 'tis nothing but complaints and reproaches. You become peevish, troublesome, jealous. One neither knows how to take you, or how to leave you.—'Tis true, Madam, I did formerly give into those absurdities, but I can assure you that I am quite altered; I am a new man. You may take me into your service without any apprehension of that sort; and if you please, for greater security, I'll antedate my demission.—Don't make a joke, Sir, of what I am saying. Liberty and frankness are the very
soul

foul and charm of love; and without which a lover would be a husband. In such a case it would not be worth one's while to have the happiness of being a widow.—Charming Corinna, I understand your meaning; you may depend upon me.—Now, upon honour, Sir, would you give your word to a lady that might have a foible for you, to take yourself away, without noise or scandal, as soon as she should say I did love you, but I do not love you now?—To be sure I should; I have learned the way of the world; put me to the trial as soon as you think proper.—Very well, I will put you to the trial. But remember then that I don't engage to love you any longer than it is agreeable.

Alcidonis thought within himself that the white Phial might here be of service. He was mistaken; the effects of that of the rose-colour evaporated of course. He was still with Corinna, and yet his mind ran upon the other beauties he had seen at Alcippus's. This Corinna, said he, has a great deal of vivacity; but that is all. No delicacy, none of the sentimental charms. She changes her lovers as she does her dress. I shall be turned adrift to-morrow, if to-morrow another should happen to please her. I think I am very good thus to squander away so many sighs, oaths and protestations. They would have turned to a much better account, had I devoted them to that other fair lady, whose languishing blue eyes looked upon me with an air so tender and moving. And now I think on't, Corinna has told me a hundred spiteful things of Cephisa; it is plain that Cephisa has merit. She seems indeed to be formed of the coldest clay; but then what pleasure to animate a statue! a woman naturally of a lively disposition is so with every body; Cephisa

phisa will be lively only with me. I'll go and make her my addressees. I shan't wait for my demission; Corinna shall know immediately that I am none of those that are to be turned away at a minute's warning.

Alcidonis repeated over and over the same fine tender things that he had said before to Corinna; but with a little more caution and reserve. Is it possible, said she, with the greatest sensibility, that you would really be unhappy if I should not love you?—More unhappy than I can express. —Indeed I am very sorry for it; I don't know what it is to be in love.—Ah! beautiful Cephisa, what, with that enchanting smile, that sweet and tender look, that soft pleasing voice which penetrates the very soul, and yet not know any thing of love!—'Tis really so; I am quite a stranger to it—What if I should make you acquainted with it?—I shall take it as a great obligation, for I am curious to know what it is. Several have endeavoured at it but not one ever succeeded. My husband himself would lose his labour.—Your husband! that is no wonder; but have you not had lovers?—A great many; very handsome, and very fond.—And did you not answer their passion? —No: they all complained of my not loving them. It was not my fault, I did my best. Do but think of my taking four at a time, in hopes that in the number I might love at least one or two; it was all in vain.

This is, said Alcidonis, an open simplicity of which there are few examples. Don't lose courage, my dear, I warrant you that you will love me.—Do you think so?—I am sure of it; you have a sensibility.—Sensibility! aye now and then; but it never lasts above a moment.—It must be a disorder sure. Did you never sacrifice

rice to Venus in hopes of being cured?—My husband has offered many a one, but ah! to no purpose; for he always found me at his return from the temple just as he had left me.—Why did he not conduct you there himself?—He did not chuse it, because the priest was a young man that wanted to initiate me.—Initiate you! do you know the ceremony of it?—Alas! I know nothing at all. Shall I teach it you, reply'd Alcidonis, taking some freedom. Hold, Sir, said she, you are acting as if I loved you, and I don't perceive that I love as yet.—How should you perceive it, if we don't make some some essay towards it?—O! I have made a thousand, but all that proves nothing. One while I fancy I love, and the next minute I feel that I don't love. We had better wait till it comes; if it does, I'll let you know it.

Alcidonis advanced daily in his progress towards quickening Cephisa's insensibility. But she was not yet come to the point that he wanted to bring her to. He proposed, in hopes of warming her imagination, that they two should meet at a grand festival that was to be celebrated in honour of Venus. She consented, on condition that she should not be initiated. Next day each of them, for decency's sake repaired alone to the temple. The young men and maidens dressed like the loves and graces, sung hymns in praise of the goddess; and danced to the sound of their lyres, under the shade of the sacred grove that surrounded the temple.

Cephisa was first at the rendezvous. O Alcidonis! said she, I was looking about for you. I have good news to tell. The goddess has prevented our wishes; I really think I begin to love you in good earnest. I dreamt of you last night;
you

you seemed to be very pressing, and I was yielding.—And what then?—I shall tell you that at supper. At supper! answered Alcidonis, with an air of indifference, his eyes taken up with the ceremony; to supper you say, with all my heart What a pretty girl that dancer is! How charmingly this other sings!—We shall be by ourselves; do you mind?—By ourselves, you say; I wish I knew who that pretty dancer is!—Alcidonis, what are you about? You don't listen to me.—Yes, yes, I hear what you say; but I want to find somebody that can tell me. . . .

O Pamphilius, a word with you, inform me, pray, who that pretty dancer is? 'Tis Chloe, answered Pamphilius, we sup together.—What! to-night?—Yes, to night.—I must be of the party.—That can't be.—My dear Pamphilius, I shall take it as the greatest mark of your friendship.—What are you doing? whispered Cephisa, quite confounded. You know that you are to sup with me.—It is very true, that it was my design; but I have promised my friend Pamphilius. My word is sacred, and I would not break it on any account.

He saw Chloe, thought her charming for a quarter of an hour, and the instant after quite insipid. He likewise saw Philliria the dancer; he was enamoured with her the whole evening, and next morning he could not bear her. Ah! said he, how very fatiguing are all these fantasies! every moment new desires, and none that give satisfaction! 'tis the torment of the *Danaïdes*. Away with all these shadows of inclination, fleeting and returning to fleet again; that give me neither rest nor pleasure. I'll drink a total forgetfulness of my follies. He said, and swallowed the

the remains of the white Phial. He had none left now but the blue, and his future happiness depends on the use he makes of it.

Alcidonis had studied philosophy under Aristus the academician. Aristus died and left a young widow, one of the most virtuous and beautiful women in the world. The disciple of Aristus thought it incumbent on him to condole with her for her loss, and make her an offer of his friendly services. Gliceria refused them with a modest sweetness, mixt with a decent pride. I have little wealth, said she, but my desires are still less. My husband left me the most precious of inheritances, contentment with mediocrity, and the habit of living upon little. So much prudence, joined to so much beauty, deserved a sincere and solid attachment. Now is the time, said Alcidonis, to drink of the blue Phial.

Immediately his heart beat gently with a sweet, calm, but lively warmth. No longer now that turbulency of fantastic inclinations, those furious transports of unbounded passions. It was a delicious effusion that ran through his veins, the foreboding of happiness. His whole ambition is to be joined to Gliceria; to share the same fate, to have but one life, one soul; and yielding to his impatience, he acquainted her with his desire of being united to her for ever. Gliceria was not insensible of this mark of his love and esteem. You are so generous, said she, as to offer me your hand; I will deserve it by my refusal. If I accepted of it, I should be unworthy of that honour. In vain he assured her of his father's consent; in vain he represented that her denial was unwarrantable, and what reproaches she would have to make herself, in rendering him the most wretched of mankind; she remained inflexible.

Gliceria,

Gliceria, nevertheless, in her retirement, was constantly in tears. The only slave she had left, saw her consume away with grief, without being able to guess the cause of it. Was it to be attributed to the death of Aristus? What, for ever lament the loss of a husband, not young, and a philosopher! It was not natural. Her mistress wrote often to a citizen of Argos; and the answers which she used to receive, drew from her the most profound sighs. The slave's zeal, or perhaps curiosity, moved her to open one of Gliceria's letters. It was as follows.

‘ If you have not, Sir, a heart of flint, you
 ‘ will be moved at the distress of an unfortunate
 ‘ woman, who would give to the very last drop
 ‘ of her blood to regain her father's liberty.
 ‘ Aristus, my husband, to whom I did not blush
 ‘ to own that I was the daughter of a slave, spared
 ‘ neither pains nor cost to restore him to my
 ‘ fond wishes; but all his enquiries proved ineffectual.
 ‘ At length I have heard that he is in
 ‘ your power; and I hear it at a time that I am
 ‘ poor. All that I am worth I have had appraised;
 ‘ but alas! it will not amount to near the
 ‘ sum which you demand for his ransom. I have
 ‘ but one resource, and that is, to offer myself in
 ‘ exchange for my father. It is not just that I
 ‘ should be free whilst he is in slavery. I am
 ‘ young, and he is bent down with years. You
 ‘ may reap much greater advantages from my
 ‘ servitude than from his. My hands will grow
 ‘ inured to labour, as my heart already is to patience.
 ‘ If I had a mind to make use of the
 ‘ facility a person of my age has to seduce and
 ‘ make the men interest themselves in my favour,
 ‘ I should not be reduced to this cruel ex-
 ‘ tremity:

'tremity: but slavery is less shameful than vice,
'and my choice is made without hesitation.'

The slave, penetrated with admiration and pity, carried the letter to Alcidonis. Ah! cry'd he, with tears in his eyes, this is the cause of her refusal! She is born a slave! But what is that to me? Virtue enobles her, and makes her free. 'Tis fortune that ought to be ashamed. Ah, what piety! what tenderness! Gliceria in slavery! why have I not a throne to offer you? For heaven's sake, said he to the slave, keep this affair secret. I'll set out this moment. Your mistress's tears shall soon be dried, and your zeal shall be rewarded.

Alcidonis arrives at Argos, and Gliceria's father is at liberty. The unknown that ransomed him, gave him wherewithal to bear his charges to Athens; and said, taking his leave, You are returning to the arms of your Gliceria; 'tis to her virtue and tenderness that you owe your freedom. It is in her power to be happy, and to make you so. But if this piece of service which I have done is dear to you, promise me to engage your virtuous daughter not to reveal to the man, who shall demand her for his spouse, her birth, nor your misfortunes. I am well acquainted with the person; I know that he has the greatest regard for her, and it would give him infinite pain to see her put to the blush.

And if ever your benefactor should fall in your way, hide your gratitude; he does not choose to be known to any but yourself. What, said the good old man, smother my gratitude! not let my daughter know the hand that has broke my chains! No, replied Alcidonis, let not Gliceria be mortified by such a shocking discovery. There are
certain

certain duties that humble the soul ; leave her's, I conjure you, its virtuous and noble liberty. The old man promised to do all that his deliverer required.

He arrived at Athens ; his daughter almost fainted away with surprize and joy. O my father ! said she, what kind Deity has given you back to your afflicted daughter ? was your avaricious master at last softened ? Yes, my child, said he, and I know that it is to your filial piety and virtue that I owe my liberty, my life, and the unexpected happiness of dying in your arms.

Alcidonis at his return waited on Gliceria, and pressed her, with all the fondness of respectful love, to consent to their marriage. The old man, according to his promise, had enjoined his daughter not to discover the low condition to which they had been reduced. No, replied she, it is less mortifying to own it, than it is to hide it. Whoever has an interest in the knowledge of who I am, shall learn it from myself.

You have a mind then, said she to Alcidonis, that I should discover to you the bottom of my soul. So long as I was unhappy, I kept my grief to myself ; but you deserve to partake of my joy. Know then, that it was my fate to be born a slave. I was set at liberty ; but my father still groaned under the weight of his chains. Some propitious God has restored him to me. He is free ; he is here ; you will see him presently. The stain of our slavery can never be wiped away, and owning to you what we are, is declaring, that neither your honour, nor my gratitude, will ever permit me to listen to your solicitations.

Gliceria, you wrong me to the highest degree, said Alcidonis, full of grief and love. Do you

think that I am less a philosopher, or have not so much generosity as Aristus? Did you hide from him the misfortune of your birth? I know you did not. He despised the injustice of fortune, and that of opinion. Am I not his disciple? His precepts are engraved in my heart. Can there be any shame in following his example? or do you think that I have not virtue enough to imitate him? 'Tis not virtue, reply'd she, smiling, but prudence that you want. Aristus had lived long enough to gain experience. You are not come to that age, where one may answer for one's self. I save you from cares, and perhaps from repenting.

Alcidonis near distracted at Gliceria's obstinate resistance, was on his knees, endeavouring to excite her pity, when the old man, whom he had redeemed from bondage, appeared. Whom do I see, he cry'd! ah! my dear daughter, 'tis he himself. Then suddenly recollecting what Alcidonis had enjoined him not to reveal, he stopped short, and remained with his eyes fixt on his deliverer, not without shedding some tears. What, said Gliceria, with surprize, are you acquainted with him? 'Tis he himself you say. Tell me, O! tell me, what has he done for you? where did you see him? Alcidonis, you blush, you cast down your eyes. My father looks upon you with tenderness! I understand you both. O dear Sir, 'tis Alcidonis to whom you owe your freedom, 'tis to him I am indebted for my father.—Yes, my child, he is my benefactor. Is this, said Alcidonis, catching him in his arms and embracing him, just as the old man was falling at his feet, is this the promise that you made me? O pardon me, answered Gliceria's father, my heart

heart was full, and my daughter has found it out, but indeed I could not help it.—Well then, since she knows all that is past, pray force your cruel child to be more merciful to me. 'Tis her heart, 'tis her hand that I request, as a reward for the happiness she enjoys in what I have restored to her. The old man could not forbear taxing his daughter with an ingratitude, of which she was not capable, and taking her trembling hand, he put it into that of his deliverer. 'Tis to your dear venerable father then that I am obliged for this sweet hand that you refused me; and which he ardently kissed. Make yourself easy, answered Gliceria, with a kind, penetrating look, you are obliged to my father for my hand; but my heart is my own gift.

Alcidonis was transported with joy. He employed the rest of the day in preparing all that was necessary for their setting out the next for Megara. In the night, as he enjoyed sweet undisturbed repose, the Fairy Galanta appeared to him again. Alcidonis, said she, be happy. Love without inquietude; possess without distaste, and desire no more than what you can enjoy. Let others be jealous, but never be so yourself. 'Tis not only my advice, 'tis your destiny that I inform you of. You have drank at the source of perfect happiness. I distribute to all comers the purple and rose-colour Phials; but the blue I always reserve for my favourites.



LAUSUS and LYDIA.

A MORAL TALE.

Lausus equum domitor debellatorque ferarum.

VIR. ÆN. vii.

THE character of Mezentius, king of Tyrrhene, is well known; a bad prince and good father, cruel and compassionate by turns; he had nothing of the tyrant, nothing that shewed the violence of his temper, so long as his will was not opposed; but the calm of his haughty soul was the lion's repose.

Mezentius had a son named Lausus, whose valour and comeliness were equally remarkable amongst the young heroes of Ausonia. Lausus had accompanied his father to the war against the king of Præneste. Mezentius, with pride and joy, saw him fighting by his side, covered over with blood and dust. The king of Præneste lost the battle, and was driven from his dominions; and in saving himself by flight, was obliged to leave in the conqueror's power a treasure infinitely more precious than his crown; a princess of that age, where the heart has no virtues but those of nature, and where nature had all the charms of innocence and beauty. Whatever the graces in tears could shew of majesty, and soften the heart to tenderness, appeared in the countenance of Lydia. In the midst of her grief that was mixt with courage and dignity, she was easily

easily distinguished from the crowd of her attendants to be the daughter of their king. She received the first respects of her enemies without pride, without humility, as a homage due to her birth, which even misfortunes ought not to lessen. She heard her father mentioned, and at his name she raised to heaven her beautiful eyes streaming with tears. All that beheld her were concerned, and every heart was moved; even Mezentius himself was moved, and forgot both his haughtiness and his age. Prosperity, that hardens the heart of the pusillanimous, softens that of the valiant; nor is there any thing more pleasing than a real hero after the gain of a battle.

If the stern heart of Mezentius could not resist the charms of his captive, what impression must they not have made on that of the young and virtuous Lausus? He grieved at his success, and was sorry for his victory; they were afflictions to Lydia. Let her take her revenge, said he; let her hate me as much as I love her; I have deserved it. But a more terrible apprehension seized his mind. He perceived the temper of Mezentius to be altered on a sudden, and abruptly pass from vengeance to clemency. He knew very well that it was not a dictate of humanity that produced this revolution in his heart, and the dread of having his father for a rival completed his misfortune. At the age Mezentius was of, jealousy is a close attendant on love. The tyrant observed, with a perplexed attention, the looks of his son; he thought he perceived that the joy and satisfaction which flushed so conspicuously in the countenance of the young hero after his first victory, were suddenly vanished.

He watched him more attentively. He saw his confusion, and often surprised him looking in such a manner as wanted no interpreter. From that moment he thought himself betrayed; but nature still suspended his resentment. A tyrant, even in his rage, would fain make himself believe that he acts justly; wherefore Mezentius, before he condemned his son, had a mind to convince him of his crime. He began with disguising his intentions with so much art, that Lausus imagined that his father really acted from a principle of clemency, rather than from that of love; for Mezentius, in appearance, affected to give the princess all the liberty she could desire. The court of a tyrant is never without spies and informers; those constant attendants of such men in power, who, as they cannot make themselves beloved, place all their grandeur in making themselves feared. Lausus, who had no suspicion of that kind, was less apprehensive of any danger in paying his most obsequious respects to the princess. He mixed with that homage something so charming and tender, that she could not but perceive the delicacy of his sentiments, and began to reproach herself for hating indiscriminately the whole race of such as she thought her foes. Lausus was no less disturbed in having contributed to her misfortunes, and took the gods to witness, that it should be the business of his life to make her satisfaction. My father, said he, is as generous after victory, as he is stern and untractable before the battle; satisfied with having overcome, he crushes not the vanquished. I know that now is the time, whilst he is elate with success, that he will more readily come into making a peace with the king of Præneste, equally glorious and useful to both. O charming
Lydia!

Lydia ! that peace will dry up your tears ; but will it obliterate the crime of those that were so unfortunate as to make them flow ? Why did not my own blood gush out in streams, rather than to have made you shed those precious drops ?

Lydia in her answer, full of majestic modesty, gave him little room to hope for more than what she shewed by the appearance of a tranquil becoming gratitude ; but in her heart she felt how very sensible it was to all that Lausus did to assuage her affliction. She sometimes blushed on recollecting that she had caught herself in listening to him with more complacency than she ought ; but then her father's interest and concerns made it incumbent on her to manage affairs as much as lay in her power for his advantage.

However, as their conversation became more frequent, so they became more lively, more interesting and more intimate ; and love, by imperceptible degrees, began to pierce thro' gratitude and respect, as a flower gently bursting to fragrance, breaks through the thin and delicate texture that covers its beauteous hue.

Deceived more and more by the treacherous tranquillity of Mezentius, his unsuspecting son flattered himself with the pleasing hope of seeing very soon his love consistent with his duty : for according to the notion he had formed, could any thing be more natural than their reconciliation ? The peace, which he had settled in his mind, consisted of two principal articles, to restore to the king of Præneste his dominions, and to make his marriage with the princess the bond of union between the two belligerent powers. He communicated his thoughts to Lydia. The success that he imagined would attend, the mutual advantages that must necessarily accrue, and the transports of joy

that the very idea raised in his soul, forced a tender smile from the lovely captive amidst her tears. Generous prince, she said, may heaven prove propitious to the kind wishes you make for my father's welfare. I shall not think myself unhappy to be the bond of peace, and the pledge of gratitude. This moving answer was accompanied with a still more moving look. The tyrant was informed of all. The first motion of his resentment would have hurried him to sacrifice his rival; but then Lausus was his only son, the hopes of his kingdom, and the strength of his crown. As he was the chief tie between his people and him, he must for ever become odious, should he destroy the bulwark that alone defended him from the public's hatred. Fear is the predominant weakness of tyrants. Mezentius, therefore, thought it best to have recourse to his usual dissimulation, as the surest way. He sent for his son, spoke to him with seeming cordiality, and ordered him to set out the next morning to the frontiers of the kingdom, where he had left the army, and where his presence was necessary. The prince struggled hard to hide his vexatious disappointment, and was obliged to depart without having an opportunity of taking leave of his dear princess.

The very day that Lausus set out, Mezentius sent proposals to the king of Præneste for a safe and honourable peace; the principal of which was his own marriage with the captive princess. The unfortunate king did not hesitate a moment to give his consent; and the same messenger that carried the proposals of peace, brought back for answer his ratification.

Lausus had left a friend at court, one who had been brought up with him from their infancy. A very striking and singular likeness of their persons

sens was originally the occasion of their connection, and the young man's preferment. His name was Phanor. But they resembled each other more, if possible, by their character than by their figure. The same inclinations, the same virtues; as if Lausus and Phanor had but one and the same soul. Lausus had before this made his friend the confidant of his love, and now in taking his leave, entrusted to him his apprehensions and his despair. The prince was no sooner gone, than Phanor, hearing of the intended match between Mezentius and the princess, was in the utmost distress. He thought it his duty, at all events, to inform his friend of what was transacting in his absence.

When Lausus received the shocking intelligence, his situation is not to be described; his fond and tender heart was so agitated, so confounded, that he had no command of his reason; and bewildered by his grief, he wrote to Lydia the most passionate and most imprudent letter that ever was dictated by the god of love. Phanor, of course, was charged to deliver it to her, though at the peril of his life, which must be the forfeit, should it be discovered. Alas! it was. The furious king ordered him to be immediately loaded with irons, and dragged into a dungeon.

Nevertheless every thing was preparing for the celebration of the fatal nuptials. You may very readily imagine that the proposed entertainments and diversions were of a piece with the character of Mezentius. The athletic games in the Circus, wrestlers, gladiators, battles of carnivorous animals; all that inhumanity had invented in the most barbarous ages, was prepared for the chief entertainment of this shocking exhibition. There was nothing wanting to complete its horror, but

men fighting with wild beasts; and it was an established custom never to expose to these frightful combats but such criminals as lay under sentence of death; Mezentius, who upon the slightest suspicion never failed of oppressing the innocent, was not long in determining the fate of the guilty; so that there was none left in the prisons but the unfortunate friend of Lausus. Let him be brought forth, said the tyrant, and exposed to the devouring lions. The wretch deserves a more cruel death, but this punishment is more suitable to his crime, and to my revenge; he falls a just sacrifice to offended love.

Lausus waited for an answer from his friend; but all in vain. His impatience gave way to his fears. Are we discovered? said he to himself; have I undone for ever my dear Phanor by my fatal imprudence, and Lydia too? I shudder at the thought; I cannot live in this terrible uncertainty, let the consequence be what it will. Thus agitated, he set out. He disguised himself with the greatest precaution, and arrived at his father's court. He listens to what is rumoured in the crowd, and finds that his dear Phanor is in prison, and that Mezentius and Lydia are to be joined the next day in marriage. He learns at the same time what preparations were making to celebrate the nuptials, and that the chief entertainment was to see his ever faithful friend delivered up to the ferocious animals; he sinks under the weight of this shocking news; a cold shivering seizes on his nerves; he recovers from his fit almost frantic with grief and horror, and falling on his knees, O ye immortal gods! he cried, hold, hold my hand; I am terrified at the excess of my despair; give me courage to support life till I can save my friend; then let me resign it, and preserve

serve my honour. From that minute he took the determined resolution to deliver his dear Phanor, though at his own peril. He hastens to the prison, but how was he to gain admittance? He applied to the slave whose occupation it was to carry victuals to the prisoners. Friend, said he, look at me, and recollect whether you know me. I am Lausus thy prince, thy king's son. I expect from thee a most important service. Phanor is in fetters; I must see him, and I will. I have no other means to compass my design but in changing cloaths with thee; accept of this purse, the first token of my gratitude. Hasten out of reach of my father's vengeance. If thou betrayest me, thy death is certain; but if thou provest faithful to me in this exigency, my unbounded generosity shall find thee out, wert thou hid in the most obscure desert.

The slave, timorous and weak, yielded to his promises, or perhaps to his threats. He entered into the prince's scheme, and after having minutely instructed him in every circumstance how to deceive the vigilance of the guards, he made the best of his way off. Night approaches, the instant is come. Lausus presents himself under the disguise of the slave; and the prison bolts are opened with a dreadful rattling. By the feeble light of a lamp he penetrates into this abode of desolation; he advances; he listens; the accents of a plaintive voice strike his ears: he knows it to be that of his friend; he sees him stretched on the cold ground in a corner of the dungeon, scarce covered with rags; consumed with languor, the paleness of death on his cheeks, and the fire of despair in his eyes. Leave me, said Phanor, taking him for the slave, leave me to myself; take back again that odious support to nature,
and

and let me die. Alas! he cried, almost suffocated with groans, my dear Lausus is still more wretched than I am. O heavens! if he knew the situation into which he has plunged his friend. —He does know it, cried out Lausus, precipitating himself into his arms; yes, my dear Phanor, he knows it, and is come to share it with you. What do I hear? whom do I see? said Phanor, almost distracted with surprize and joy. Oh Lausus! O my prince! At these words they both remained as if deprived of life; their arms interfolded in each other's and mingling their tears together. They remained some time in this forlorn condition, almost unmoveable on the ground; grief stopped the utterance of their voice; they had no other means left to express their love but by their throbbing hearts, which answered each other with groans and sighs. At last Lausus recovering his senses, said, Let us lose no time, my dear Phanor; take these cloaths that I have on, make your escape and leave me here! —I leave you here! O ye immortal gods! that I should be such a wretch as to make my escape and leave you here! Ah! Lausus, how could you harbour so mean an opinion of your friend? I know you well, replied the prince, but you ought to know me likewise. The sentence is pronounced; there is no medium, death or flight. —Flight! and leave you here! —Mind me, Phanor, and listen attentively to what I say. My father is of a violent temper, but he is not without tenderness. Nature has great power in his heart. If I can save you from death, it will be no difficult task to plead for my own life; the hand of a father uplifted over his son's head is easily disarmed. But should he strike the fatal blow? interrupted Phanor; no, I cannot for my soul

soul abandon you. Well then, said Lausus, remain and die; but in thy last agonies thou shalt behold me gasping in death. Don't flatter thyself with the thoughts of any indulgence that I may expect from a father; I disclaim it. He may pardon me if he thinks fit, but I shall never pardon myself. This hand that wrote the fatal letter which has brought thee to ruin, this hand that has loaded thee with chains, this hand, guilty as it may be, is still the hand of thy friend, and which, in spite of thee, shall for ever unite us in death. In vain Phanor strove to resist. Let us talk no more of it, I conjure you, said the prince; you can argue nothing that can balance the shame which would be my eternal portion should I survive my friend, after having been the cause of his death; thy urgency makes me blush, and I look upon thy entreaties as so many reflections on my honour and friendship. In short, I'll answer for my safety, if thou wilt consent to secure thyself; if not, I swear by all that is sacred, that my death is as certain as thine, if thou persist to perish. Take your choice, the moments are precious.

Phanor was too well acquainted with his friend's temper to think of shaking his resolution. Well, I consent, he said, that you shall try the only method that remains for our preservation; but remember that you must save your life, if you would have me live; for depend upon it your scaffold shall be mine. I expect it, replied Lausus; I love and esteem you too much to exhort you to survive me. So saying, they embraced each other, and Phanor got out of the prison under the same disguise that had introduced Lausus in.

Ah!

Ah! what a night! what a dreadful night for Lydia! and how describe the different agitations that divide and torture her soul, struggling between love and virtue; she adores Laulus as much as she detests Mezentius; she sacrifices herself to her father's interest, delivers herself to the man she hates, and resigns for ever the charming object of her love. She is dragged to the altar as to her execution. Barbarous Mezentius! it is enough for thee to force thyself into a heart by violence and terror, enough for thee to see thy spouse trembling before thee, as a slave at his master's feet! Such is love in a tyrant's breast.

Nevertheless, unhappy maid! 'tis for him alone that she must live, to him she is to be united. If she resists, she betrays her father and her lover. A refusal would discover the secret of her soul; and should Laulus be only suspected, he is undone.

'Twas in these cruel perturbations that Lydia waited for morn; the dreadful morn is come. All aghast and trembling! she finds herself adorned, not as a bride going to be presented to the altars of love and Hymen, but like one of those innocent victims that a barbarous piety has crowned with flowers before they are sacrificed.

The princess is led to the amphitheatre; the multitude is assembled; the games begin. I shan't stop to relate the different combats of the Circus; a more shocking object takes up my attention.

An enormous lion advances, first of all; calm and stately he stalks about the Circus, casting his furious looks around the amphitheatre. A confused murmur bespoke terror and dismay. But soon he is roused by the clangor of warlike instru-

instruments, which he answers with a tremendous roar, his bushy main stiffens around his monstrous head; he whisks his tail from side to side; the fire begins to flash forth from his flaming eyes; the people in consternation desire, and yet dread to see the miserable wretch that is to be abandoned to his devouring rage; and every heart beats with fear and pity.

The combatant appears, whom even Mezentius's guards themselves mistook for Phanor. No wonder then that Lydia did not find him out. The horror with which she was seized, made her turn her head aside from a spectacle that makes nature shudder, and is a scandal to humanity. What would she have felt, alas! had she known that Phanor, her Lausus's bosom friend, was the criminal devoted to death! and, what indeed! had she known that it was Lausus himself, in lieu of his friend, that was then preparing for the fight.

Half naked, his hair dishevelled, he advances with a bold, intrepid step. A dagger for the attack, a shield for his defence, were his only weapons. Mezentius, blind through prejudice, sees no other but the guilty Phanor. O nature! where is thy voice? O blood! where is thy sympathy? For oh! 'tis his only child that he delivers up to death, and his bowels have no yearnings. Resentment of injury, and thirst of revenge, stifled every other sentiment. He beholds, with a savage joy, the lion's fury animated by degrees. Lausus, impatient for the attack, irritates the ferocious animal and spurs him on to the fight. He marches up to him; the lion springs forward, Lausus avoids him; thrice the furious creature presents his foaming jaws, and thrice the hero escapes their bloody gripe.

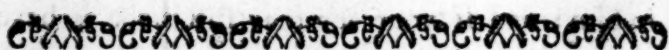
However

However Phanor, who was just informed of what was doing, pressed through the crowd. His piercing outcry made the whole amphitheatre ring. Hold, hold, Mezentius! save thy son, 'tis he, 'tis Lausus that is now engaged with the lion. Mezentius looked at him, and saw plainly that it was Phanor himself that hurried to his son's defence. O heavens! he cried, O my subjects, help, help, fly to his assistance, throw yourselves into the Circus, and snatch my son from death. At the name of Lausus, Lydia fainted away; but Mezentius had now no other attention but to his son's preservation, whom he beheld in the utmost peril. For in vain a thousand arms he raised in his defence, the lion eludes them all, and, launching on Lausus, must undoubtedly have crushed him before they could have prevented it. But a prodigy! scarce to be believed! Oh unexpected happiness! Lausus, in escaping his last furious onset, had the good fortune to strike a mortal blow, and drew his dagger from the lion's heart reeking in its blood; the monster, gnawing the dust in the convulsions of death, welters in his gore.

The universal alarm is on a sudden changed to acclamations of joy; and the people answered Mezentius, dreadful screams with shouts of admiration and applause. All this noise together recalled the princess from her swoon; and opening her languid eyes, she sees Lausus kneeling at his father's feet, in one hand the bloody poniard, the other holding that of his dear and faithful Phanor. 'Tis I, said he to the king, 'tis I alone that am guilty. Phanor's crime was mine; and it was my duty to make the atonement. I forced him to yield to me his place; I should have died
had

had he not consented. I live, and I owe my life to him; and if your son may still hope to have some share in your paternal affection, 'tis to him you are indebted for my preservation. But if your revenge is not yet sated, our lives are at your command; pronounce the sentence, and we perish together: for we are bound by the most solemn oaths not to outlive each other. Lydia, pale and trembling, looked upon Mezentius with supplicating eyes. This last trial was even too much for a tyrant to bear. Nature and remorse together stifled in his heart vengeance and jealousy. He remained for some time silent and motionless, rolling his eyes on all the objects that surrounded him, with looks of confusion and disorder, where love and hatred, pity and resentment, by turns, succeeded in his soul. All remain in awful anxiety about the tyrant. Lausus, Phanoor, Lydia, thousands of spectators, wait with trembling hearts for the dictates of his will. Mezentius at last confesses, spight of himself, the power of superior virtue; and rushing suddenly, with impetuous violence, from one extreme to another, he threw himself into his son's arms. Yes, he cried, I forgive thee, and I forgive thy friend; live and love each other; but there is still another sacrifice to make, and thou hast rendered thyself worthy of it. Take then thy reward, continued he with some struggle, receive the hand of the princess, a present dearer to thee than life; thy valour has forced it from me: that and that only could have obliged me to resign so great a treasure.

HAPPILY.



H A P P I L Y.

A M O R A L T A L E.

NO, madam, said the abbé de Chateauneuf to the old marchioness of Lisban, I cannot believe that what is called virtue in a woman, is so rare as is imagined; for instance, without going further, I would lay a wager that you never strayed from it.—Why really, my dear abbé, I am very near saying, like *Moliere's Agnes*, don't lay.—Should I lose?—No: you would win; but by so very, very little, that, upon my word it is not worth bragging of.—As much as to say your virtue has been in danger? —Yes, yes, it has been in many a storm, aye, and near shipwreck'd too. But *Happily* I am safe arrived in port. Will you be so kind, said the abbé, as to relate your adventures? —With all my heart; we are now, my good old friend, of an age to lay aside all dissimulation. I see my youthful days in such a distant perspective, that I may talk of them as a pleasing dream.

If you recollect the marquis of Lisban, he was one of those vacant figures insipidly handsome, that seems to say, 'this is Me;' full of that kind of awkward vanity which always misses its aim, setting the highest value on himself, and had nothing in him to be valued for. He would force his discourse upon you, impose silence, and talk nonsense; laugh'd at what he was about to tell, and nobody so much as smiled at his tale; he often endeavoured at refinement, and refined so much, that he did not know what he was saying.

When

When the women were fatigued with his impertinence, he fancied they were musing on him; if they diverted themselves with his ridiculousness, 'twas making him advances.—Ah, dear madam, what a blessed disposition!—In our first interviews, I was entertained with an account of his amours; I began to hear him with impatience, I ceased to listen with disgust. I even took the liberty to inform my parents, that I thought him the most tiresome, dull creature on earth. They told me that I was a simpleton; for that a husband was always so. We were married. They made me promise to love him, and him alone; my lips said yes, my heart said no; and my heart told truth. Count Palmene, a friend of my husband's, made us a visit; he was endowed with all the graces of mind and person. The marquis introduced him to me, and did the honours of my modesty: he answered all the agreeable things the count was pleased to say on his happiness, with an air of self-sufficiency, that raised my indignation. If you gave credit to what he said, I lov'd him to an excess; from thence proceeded those indiscreet, fulsome declarations of pretended confidences, that are equally shocking to truth and good manners, where vanity makes use of that silence which modesty enjoins. I could hold no longer. I left the room, and Palmene might easily see, by my behaviour, that the marquis imposed upon him. What an impertinent puppy is my husband? thought I to myself; he boasts of his triumphs, because he knows I have not the courage to contradict him. People will believe him, and suppose me to have so little taste as to be in love with the most empty, vain coxcomb in the world. Had he only mentioned my
strict

strict performance of my duties, that might be endured; but to be in love! have a weak fondness! that is too much. I shall appear contemptible; no, no, it shall not be said that I am so great a fool as to dote upon my husband; but above all it is incumbent on me to undeceive the count.

The marquis, who was delighted to have made me blush, did not apprehend any more than I did then myself, what was the real cause of my anger and confusion. He valued himself too much, and me too little, to vouchsafe to be jealous. You have behaved like a child, said he, as soon as Palmene was gone, and yet for all that, he thinks you a charming creature; but don't trust too much to what he says; for, let me tell you, he is a dangerous man. I felt it better than he could tell it.

Next day, count Palmene renew'd his visit; he found me alone. Will you pardon me, madam, said he, to have been the innocent cause of the little confusion I saw you in yesterday? I should have been glad to have dispensed with the marquis's choosing me for his confidant. I can't imagine, I reply'd, casting down my eyes why he takes so much pleasure to relate what gives me so much pain to hear. — Ah! madam, when a man is so happy, a little indiscretion is excuseable. — If he is happy, I wish him joy; but really I don't know what grounds he has for it. — How can he be otherwise, resum'd the count with a sigh, when he possesses the most charming woman in the world? — Well, sir, I'll suppose that I am what you are pleas'd to say, where is the honour, the merit, the happiness to possess me? Did I give myself to him? — No, madam, but if I may believe him, you soon approv'd

prov'd of the choice that was made for you.—

Will men then never consider, that we learn dissimulation from our infancy; that we lose our frankness with our liberty, and that it is too late to exact sincerity, when it has been laid down to us as a duty to have none at all?

I think tho', my good friend, I forgot that duty a little, when I so openly spoke my mind; I was sensible of it, but it was done; and Palmene took it, no doubt, in that light. When a woman owns she does not love her husband; 'tis next to saying she loves somebody else; and whoever such a declaration is made to, is likely to be the man. This notion, I fancy, threw the count into a pleasing revery. You must then, said he, after some silence, be a great dissembler indeed; for the marquis has told me such surprising things of your mutual love.—With all my heart, let him flatter himself as much as he pleases, I shall never strive to undeceive him.—But, madam, is your situation then to be pitied?—I do my duty, and I submit to my fate; ask no further questions, and I entreat you not to make a wrong construction of what my husband's imprudence, my own vexation, and natural simplicity, have drawn from me.—Make a wrong construction! I, madam! no; I'd sooner die than be unworthy of your trust; but I must have that trust confided without reserve in me alone: look upon me henceforward as a sincere friend, who will partake of all your troubles, and in whose faithful breast you may safely deposite them.

The name of friend filled my heart with a pleasing, treacherous tranquillity. I had no diffidence either on his account or my own. To be sure a friend of two days date, formed as the

COUNT

count was, and at his age, must seem the most reasonable and decent thing that could possibly be; and a husband, such as mine, must of course appear the most ridiculous and insupportable creature in the world. From that time, the marquis obtained of me no more than those cold compliances my duty obliged me to yield to; which he had the folly to be proud of, and still it was to Palmene that he communicated and exaggerated his happiness. Palmene could hardly think what all this meant. Why endeavour to impose upon me? he would sometimes say; why should you disown so reasonable an attachment? Are you ashamed to declare the contrary?—No, sir, I am not so happy as to have any reason to retract. In saying this, my heart was full, my eyes ready to overflow. What did not Palmene say to sooth my distress! What pleasure to listen to his sympathising protestations! Ah! my dear abbé, what a dangerous comforter! in short, he usurped an absolute empire over all my sentiments, except my love for him, which was the only secret I had not entrusted him with. He never had as yet declared his to me, but under the mask of friendship; but, at last, taking advantage of the power he had assumed, he wrote to me thus:

‘ I have deceived you and myself. That sweet
 ‘ and tranquil friendship, to which I gave my-
 ‘ self up without reserve, is, I find, become the
 ‘ most passionate and violent love that ever was.
 ‘ I shall wait upon you this evening, to devote to
 ‘ you my life, or bid you an eternal adieu.’

I can't explain to you, my good friend, what different emotions agitated me all together; I know

know that there was a mixture of virtue, love and fear; and I know likewise, that there was something of joy. I laid my scheme to make a fine defence. First, I was resolved not to be alone; for I'll give orders that I am at home to all visitors; and then I shall so overlook him, as not to give him an opportunity of fixing his eyes on mine. That effort will cost me dear; but virtue is not virtue for nothing. In short, I will avoid any private conversation; and, if he dares to assume one, I shall answer him in such a manner, ay, in such a manner as to humble him.

My resolution thus fix'd, I sat me down to my toilet; and to be sure it was without design; but I don't know how, I dressed myself with more care and elegance than usual. As according to my orders I was at home to all that came, I had that evening much company, which, instead of pleasing me ('tis odd you will say) put me out of humour, and my husband, to fill up the measure of my vexation, as if he did it on purpose, was more assiduous and more troublesome than ever. Palmene came at last; he bow'd to me with a modest confusion; I return'd a very low courtesy, without so much as looking at him; and I said to myself, Bravo! this will do. The conversation was, at first, general: but Palmene now and then dropped some words, which were of little or no significance to the rest of the company; but were very significant to me. I feign'd not to understand them, and valued myself greatly in keeping up a vigour so well timed. I saw Palmene was afraid to come near me; but my husband, with his foolish familiar jokes, obliged him to it. The count's respect and timidity began to soften my resolution. Poor thing, thought I, he is more to be pitied than blamed; if he
durst,

durst, he would ask me pardon; but to be sure he never can dare to do it. I gave some kind of a look that embolden'd him. Madam, said he, I have been imprudent; will you forgive me?—
—No, sir; that *no* pronounced in a certain tone, seem'd to me sublime. Palmene rose to take his leave; but the marquis forced him to stay. Come, my dear count, supper is on table, be gallant and squire my wife; she is a little out of humour; but we'll put her in again.

Palmene quite concern'd, could not refrain from gently squeezing my hand; I look'd at him, and saw in his eyes the image of love and grief. I own, my dear abbé, I was affected; and, by a motion which proceeded from my heart, my hand answered to the soft impression of his. I cannot describe the sudden alteration of his countenance. Joy sparkled in his eyes with more than usual brilliancy; and that joy was soon diffus'd thro' the whole company: all seemed animated, by his example, with love and the desire of pleasing.

The conversation turned upon gallantry. My precious husband, who thought himself a very Ovid in the art of love, said, according to custom, an hundred fooleries; which the count, in answering him, softened with a politeness and delicacy that charm'd me. Happily a young coxcomb, that sat next me, took it in his head to make me pretty speeches. Happily I lent him some attention, and answer'd him with civility. Palmene, the charming Palmene's temper and language changed all of a sudden; the conversation passed from love to coquetry. The count declaimed against that general desire of pleasing every body with a warmth and gravity that surpris'd me. I could forgive, said he, a woman
that

that changes her lover ; nay, I could bear with her having several at a time ; all that is in nature ; it is not her fault if she is not to be fixed ; at least she does not endeavour to captivate more than those she likes, and renders happy ; and, if she favours two or three, 'tis a blessing multiplied. But a coquette is a tyrant that would subdue all that behold her, merely for the pleasure of making them her slaves. She is herself her only idol, without the least regard for any body else ; her pride sports with our foibles, and triumphs in our pains : her looks are falshood, her lips deceit, her discourse, her whole conduct, a series of snares ; her graces are but alluring syrens, and her charms so many poisons.

Such an exclamation astonished the whole company. What, said the young gentleman, who had address'd me, would you prefer a woman of pleasure before a coquette ?—No doubt, I should, and without hesitation. Why that is more convenient, said I, ironically ; and less blameable too, reply'd he, in a peevish tone ; yes, Madam, a thousand times less blameable. I was provok'd at such an insult. Sir, resum'd I with disdain, you may, if you think fit, impute to us as a crime the most innocent and most natural of amusements ; your opinion I fancy, will never pass for law. You say, that coquettes are tyrants ; you are yourself a much greater tyrant, when you would deprive us of the only advantage our sex has receiv'd from nature. If we must renounce the desire of pleasing, what have we to do in society ? Talents, genius, heroic virtues, you have them all, or think you have them all. A woman has only the privilege of endeavouring to appear amiable, and you unmercifully condemn her, to be so only in the eyes of one

particular person; 'tis annihilating the world for us, and burying us alive amongst the living. Oh! madam, said Palmene, with resentment I own you are very fit for a pattern in this age; 'tis what I should not have believed. You are in the wrong, my dear count, quite in the wrong, resum'd my husband; my wife's ambition is to please all the world; but I am the only person she will ever make happy. It is a little cruel, and so I have often told her; but what can I do? It is her foible; if people will be taken in, they must bear with the consequences; it is not her fault; then why should you look upon in so serious a light what she only says in jest; if she likes to hear herself prais'd, is that any reason that she must answer in the same strain? 'tis me alone she loves; what is more natural? but as for you, my friend, and others her admirers, who only amuse her, you can have no pretensions to her heart. No, that she has given to me; and I defy all the world to rob me of it. Oh, sir, 'tis enough, said Palmene, if you quote the marchioness for an example, I shall make no reply. So saying, we rose from table.

From that moment, I conceived for the count, I don't say an absolute aversion, but a dread of him that came very near it. What a man, thought I to myself! What an imperious temper! the woman that yields to him must become wretched. As soon as supper was over, he fell into a sullen silence, out of which there was no drawing him. At length, having found a moment's opportunity of speaking to me alone, he ask'd me, with all the authority of a severe judge, whether I really thought as I had spoke?—Assuredly.—'Tis enough, you never shall see me more.

I ap-

Happily he kept his word; and I perceived, from the vexation this rupture gave me, the danger I had narrowly escaped. Aye, thus it is, said the abbé, like a profound moralist, you see what a moment's altercation produces; a trifle; a nothing becomes serious; a quarrel; a submission! love takes the alarm, and decamps.

The chevalier Luzel's character, resum'd the marchioness, was the reverse of Palmene's.—This chevalier, I suppose, was the youngest that coquetted with you at supper?—The very same. He was as handsome as Narcissus, and lov'd himself as much. He had a certain smart cleverness, like wit; but not a grain of common sense.

What a dull mortal, said he, is your count Palmene! for goodness sake, madam, what do you do with such a man? He talks, he moralizes, he knocks you down with his arguments. For my part, I know but two things, to amuse and be amused. I have seen the world, and understand mankind; I find that the greatest misfortune in life, is not to know how to amuse yourself; and that proceeds from a dull evenness of temper, a constancy in your attachments, and, worst of all, a solidity in your reasoning, in short, a monotony that lulls even pleasure to sleep; whereas vivacity, fickleness and coquetry enliven and keep it awake; for which reason, I doat upon coquettes. They are the life of society. Besides, your condescending ladies at length grow tiresome, and 'tis very fit to look out for somebody with whom you may rest from your labour. I answer'd him with a smile, that I was the fittest person in the world for his purpose, for that he might take his rest with me at full leisure.—That's the very thing I am in quest of; all that I desire of a coquette; let her op-

pose resist, and make a brave defence. Yes, I should fly from you if I thought you capable of a serious attachment. Why, madam, resum'd the abbé, with great gravity, this young fop was a man to put you on your guard.—He was indeed, my good friend, and I soon perceiv'd it. At first, I treated him as a child, and that absolute ascendant which my reason assum'd over him, was very flattering for one of my age; but I began to grow uneasy about who should draw him from me. His frequent absence put me out of humour, and his connexions rais'd my jealousy. I insisted upon his quitting my rivals, and would fain have impos'd laws.

My dear marchioness, said he to me, one day, as I was reproaching him with his continual dissipations, have you a mind to perform a little miracle? Make me sedate and virtuous all at once, I desire no better. I understood very well, that to make him, what he called virtuous, I must cease to be so myself. However, I asked him, what should prevent this little miracle? Little or nothing, answer'd he; methinks we love one another, the rest will follow of course.—If we love one another, as you say, and as I don't believe, the miracle would already be compleated; for love alone would have made you virtuous and wise.—All that is talk, madam, let there be justice on both sides; I'll abandon every other heart to possess yours alone; for better or worse; the chance of the game, I'll run the risk; but there is an exchange to be made, for you cannot in conscience exact, that I should give up all my pleasures for nothing. Why, madam, interrupted the abbé, this chevalier was not so void of sense as you painted him. I think he reason'd mighty consequentially. I was surpris'd, reply'd
the

the marchioness; but the more I felt he was in the right, the more I strove to persuade him that he was in the wrong. I said to him, at the same time, as well as I can remember, the finest things in the world, concerning honour, duty, and conjugal fidelity. He set them all at nought. He pretended that honour was merely decorum, marriage a ceremony, and the marriage vow only a piece of politeness, a compliment that laid you under no obligations. Thus we battled in pro and con, till we were lost in our ideas; when, all of a sudden, I heard my husband coming.

Happily, Madam!—O most happily, I assure you; never did husband arrive more a-propos. We were in great confusion; the flutter I was in, would have betray'd me; so without reflection, I said to the chevalier, Hide yourself. He slipped into my dressing-room—A dangerous place of retirement, Madam—It was so; but the dressing-room open'd into another apartment, so that I was very easy about his escape. I would lay a wager, marchioness, said the abbé, with a waggish look, that the chevalier is still in the dressing-room. Patience, reply'd she, we are not yet come to the unravelling of the plot. My husband came in with that self-content that always appear'd in his countenance; and I, to hide my embarrass, ran with open arms and met him, with an exclamation of surprize and joy. Why, you little mad-cap, said he, you seem vastly delighted to see me; am not I very good to come and spend the evening with my dear? What, are not you asham'd to love your husband? Do you know that it is very ridiculous? The world says that we ought to be shut up together in a box, or that I should be banish'd from you; for that, since you are my wife, you are

good for nothing else ; that you plague your lovers to death—I, sir ! I plague nobody ; don't you know me better ?—I am the best-natur'd creature in the world,—With that innocent air one would almost believe it. For example now, count Palmene, is not he in the wrong to take ill, that you have play'd the coquette with him ? And shou'd not the chevalier Luzel be pleas'd to see you prefer your husband to him ? And what sort of a husband too, a dull, gruff fellow, that has not common sense. Is it not so ? What a comparison, in competition with the elegant chevalier !——I make none at all, I assure you.—Why Luzel is sprightly, charming, full of wit, perhaps too he has the gift of tears. Did he never weep at your knees ? You blush, that's next to a confession ; come, tell me all. Pray have done with this stuff, said I, or I shall leave the room——'Pshaw, don't you see that I am joking ?——Such joking deserves——Oh, oh, you are piqu'd ; that's threat'ning ; but do your worst, I shall not be one bit uneasy——You take advantage of my virtue——Your virtue, not at all ; I only rely upon my stars, that won't suffer me to be stamp'd you know what——And you really believe in your stars ?——I do indeed ; and I defy you to belye them. Look you here, child, I have known a great number of women, and not one of them, no matter how I behav'd, could ever resolve to play me foul. I may say, without vanity, that those that were in love with me, were thoroughly so ; 'tis not that I am conceited, or think that there is more in me than in another ; but I have a certain *Je ne sçais quoi*, as *Molier* says, that is not to be described. So saying, he strutted before a large looking-glass, admiring himself from top to toe. To shew you, continued he,

He, how little I want to constrain you, tell me, have you any rendezvous, any *tête-à-tête* to-night?—If you have, I'll withdraw. It is only on supposition that you are unengaged, that I am come to spend the evening with you. Whether I am or not, I reply'd, you'll do very well to stay—What, for more security, is it so?—Perhaps it may—I am oblig'd to you, I find we must sup together. Make haste and have done supper, cried out the abbé, your marquis puts me out of all patience. I want to see you rise from table, and your husband fairly out of your apartment.—Well, my good friend, he is gone, and I am alone in the most terrible agitation I ever felt. My heart struggling (I even blush to think of it now) between desire and fear. Trembling I approach'd my dressing-room, to see whether there was any ground for my alarms. I found nobody there, and so concluded, that Luzel had made his escape, when happily I heard a low voice in the next room: I drew near and listened; it was Luzel himself, with the youngest of my women. 'Tis true, said he, I came hither by the marchioness's appointment; but chance is much more favourable to me than love. Is there any comparison? How unjust is fate! your lady is well enough; but has she such a shape, such an air, such a bloom? 'Tis what, for example, ought to be of quality! a woman must have great pride or great modesty, to suffer near her a person of your figure and age. Faith, Lucy, if the graces are form'd like you, Venus don't shine much at her toilet.—O, pray, Sir, reserve your gallantry for my lady, and call to mind that she will be here presently.—No, no, she is otherwise engag'd, she is with her husband; they are very fit company for one another. God

forgive me, but I really thought I heard them say tender things. It would be a good joke if he should stay with her all night. However that may be, she does not know that I am here, and from hence forth I am no more for her.—But, Sir, you don't consider what would become of me if it was known—I have taken care of that, make yourself easy; if I should be seen stealing away to-morrow, there will be no difficulty to give it a turn.—But, Sir, my lady's honour—A fiddle-stick of her honour, that's a joke; your lady's honour does not depend upon such a trifle; and after all, 'tis to her advantage, that I should be thought to be her gallant, it will give her an air in the world. Oh! the wretch, cried out the abbé!—Judge, my good friend, if I was in a passion at hearing this fine discourse? I was on the point of making a disturbance; but that disturbance would have fallen on me; for my husband, nor no one else, would ever have been persuaded that the chevalier was there on Lucy's account. I resolv'd to dissemble, and rung my bell. Lucy appear'd, I never saw her look so pretty; for jealousy embellishes its object, when it cannot make it uglier. Is that one of the marquis's people that I heard with you? Yes, Madam, she answer'd with confusion.—Send him away this moment, and don't return till you have seen him out. I said no more; but whether Lucy perceiv'd that I knew better, or whether it was her fear of being found out, she dismiss'd the chevalier instantly, who got away undiscover'd. You may very well imagine, my good friend, that I was no more at home for him; and that Lucy next day dress'd my head awkwardly, did every thing wrong, was good for nothing, put me out of patience, and was turn'd away.

away. Upon my word, said the abbé, you were much in the right to say that your virtue had run great hazards. That is not all, continued the marchioness, the greatest trial is still to come. We generally passed the fine part of the season at our country-house. We had in our neighbourhood a celebrated painter, which gave my husband the bright thought of having our portraits drawn. You know that his folly was to imagine that I lov'd him extremely. He was resolv'd to have the piece historical, where we were to be represented enchain'd together by Hymen, with wreaths of flowers. The painter took the hint; but as he was us'd to draw after nature, he desired to have a model for the figure of Hymen. It happen'd that there was, at that time, not far from our house, a young abbé, who used to visit us now and then. His beautiful eyes, his rosy lips, his chin scarce spread with the down of youth, his locks that fell in ringlets on his ivory neck, the tender vivacity of his looks, the delicacy and regularity of his features, all seem'd to concur for the figure of the god. The marquis obtain'd of him the favour to sit to the painter.

At this beginning, the abbé de Chateaufneuf redoubled his attention; but conceal'd his thoughts, resolv'd to hear the end of the story.

The expressions, continued the marchioness, which were to be given the heads, produced some excellent scenes between the artist and the marquis. The more my husband attempted to put on an air of tenderness, the more stupid he looked. The painter copied faithfully, and the marquis was enrag'd to see himself drawn so true to nature. For my part, I had somewhat of a roguish mockery in my countenance, which the painter imitated exactly. The marquis rail'd,

the artist touch'd, and re-touch'd the picture; but still there appeared upon the canvas a sly huffy, and a maukish fool. I began to be tired with sitting; my husband took my lassitude for a soft languor, and affected a silly laugh, which he called a tender smile. The painter had nothing to do, but to copy what he saw. It was now Hymen's turn. Come, young gentleman, said the painter to the abbé, put on your fond looks, let us have graces mix'd with a little voluptuousness; look at the marchioness tenderly, more tenderly still; take her by the hand, added my husband, and suppose that you are saying to her, "don't be alarm'd, my beautiful favourite, these chains are only of flowers; they are binding, but the yoke is light." A little more vivacity, my dear little abbé, you look like a Hymen that is chill'd. The youngster improved wonderfully, by the instructions of the painter, and the marquis together. He got insensibly the better of his timidity, he smiled more amorously, his blooming cheeks grew more rosy, his eyes sparkled with a more languishing flame, and his hand that held mine, had a tremor, that only I could perceive. I must tell you all, my good friend; he communicated the emotion of his breast to mine, and I beheld the god with much more fondness than I did the husband. Now, that is the very thing, said the marquis, go on and prosper, my dear abbé. Don't you think so? said he, to the painter. We shall make something of our model: Don't give it up, my dear, I see it will be an admirable picture. You are now placed just as I would have you. Courage, my young friend; persist a little longer, my sweet dear; I am obliged to go upon some business for an hour or so; pray let me find you, at my return, in
the

the pretty attitude I leave you. No sooner was the marquis gone, but my modest abbé grew all on fire; my eyes feasted on his, and could not be satisfied. Our sittings were long, but seemed very short. What a pity, said the painter, that I had not an opportunity of taking the marchioness in such a moment as this! 'tis the very expression I wanted! quite another countenance! Don't flag, dear sir, keep up the spirit, 'tis with great pleasure I copy so good an original. You answer my desire; you grow more lively; and you, Madam, let us have no indolence; fix your eyes on his; my Hymen will be a master-piece. When Hymen was finish'd; I could wish, said the painter, to me, when my husband was absent, that you would give me leave to re-touch some things in your portrait. Change places, my young gentleman; take that of the marquis. Why so, said I, blushing? Oh, madam, leave that to me, I ought to know best what will make you appear to most advantage. I understood what he meant; and so did my young abbé, who blush'd as much as I. This artifice of the painter succeeded wonderfully. The drowsy languor which he had given me, became the most expressive image of timorous love. The marquis, at his return did not cease admiring an alteration, which he could not conceive. It is very extraordinary sure! would not one think that the picture has of itself stolen into life? That is the effect of my colouring, answered the painter; it opens gradually as it settles. You will find it will still improve. Why does not my face then improve, said the marquis, as well as hers? There is a wide difference, replied the artist, your features are stronger, and require a less delicate colouring.

louring. But don't be impatient; I dare say, in time, it will be as complete a husband's head as ever was seen.

The picture finish'd, the young abbé and I were at a loss. We had no longer those frequent opportunities of speaking our very souls through our eyes. His timidity and my modesty laid us under a cruel restraint. He was afraid to visit us so often as usual; and I durst not invite him to come oftener.

One day that he came, I found him thoughtful, motionless, and alone, gazing at the picture. You seem, said I, to be in a deep meditation: I was indeed, he replied, with great simplicity; for I was enjoying the only pleasure that I must taste; that of admiring your resemblance.—That's very polite—I would say more if I durst.—What would you have more?—You are contented.—Contented, Madam, I am enchanted. Ah, why do I not see you have the same look as your portrait? The portrait is well enough, I interrupted, feigning not to understand him; but I think that yours is much better.—Mine, Madam, what do you mean? It is as cold as ice.—And, I say, what do you mean by your coldness? To me it appears all on fire.—Ah, marchioness, why had I not the liberty to let my face speak my heart! I should have been quite another thing; but how could I express what I really felt, in presence of the marquis, or the painter, or both?—I was oblig'd to put on the mask of coldness. Have you a mind to see how I should have looked at you, had we been alone, give me that hand, which I so gently squeezed with tremblings, and let us place ourselves again in attitude. Would you believe it? my old friend, that I had the compliance, the curi-

curiosity, or the weakness, if you please to call it so, to let my hand fall into his. I must own that I never had seen any thing so tender, so moving, so passionately fond as my young abbé seemed to be in this dangerous *tête-à-tête*. Voluptuousness smiled upon his lips; love and desire basked in his eyes, and all the beauties of spring bloom'd on his cheeks. He pressed my hand to his heart; I felt it beat with uncommon palpitation, which soon was communicated to mine. Why to be sure, said I, striving to stifle my emotion, it would be more expressive; but then it would not be the figure of Hymen.—No, Madam, it would be that of love. But Hymen with you ought to be Cupid himself. With these amorous expressions, he was for taking liberties, and I saw the moment when he was for assuming the duty of the god, whose image he was.

Happily I had so much reason left, as to seem offended; the poor thing took my emotion for anger, and lost, in asking pardon, the very moment in which he might have offended with impunity. Ah! dear madam, cry'd out abbé de Chateaufneuf, is it possible that I could be such a simpleton? What concern have you in it? reply'd the marchioness.—Alas! the little unthinking animal you have been describing, was no other than your humble servant.—You! that cannot be! It was I indeed. I recollect every circumstance you have related; oh! had I known what I now know!—Why, my antient friend, you would have had too much the advantage; and I am afraid that this virtue, which you have set so great a price on, would have made a weak resistance. Oh! I am quite ashamed! said the abbé. I shall never forgive myself. Pray be comforted, reply'd the marchioness, with her natural affability,

lity, and agree with me, that there is oftentimes good-luck, even to persevere in virtue; for which reason, those that have the most, should not be too censorious on the failings of such as have not enough.



THE TWO UNFORTUNATE LADIES.

A MORAL TALE.

THE marchioness of Clarence was very lately retired into a convent. The sweet content and tranquillity which she perceived to dwell in that holy solitude, far from assuaging her woes, rather added bitterness to the grief which prey'd upon her heart. How happy, said she, are these virgins, who, like innocent doves, wing their flight to heaven! their life passes like a day serene, without a cloud; the pains and pleasures of the world alike unknown to them.

Amongst these pious maids, whose happiness she envied, there was one whose name was Lucilia, that appeared melancholy and dejected. Lucilia was still in the prime of vernal youth, with that set of beautiful features that characterizes a heart full of sensibility; but tears and affliction seemed to have, in some measure, tarnished their bloom: like a rose drooping in the sun's too powerful beams, declining but not faded, which left a full idea of the beauty it displayed in the cool freshness of the morning. One would think that nature had contrived a dumb, expressive language for those who have tender feelings. The marchioness read, in Lucilia's eyes, what no one else had perceived. It is very natural, that the unhap-

unhappy should love and pity those whom they imagine to be in the same condition. She fixt her inclination on Lucilia; friendship, which in the world is but a name, an intercourse of mutual services, becomes a real passion in a nunnery. Their hearts were soon intimately connected. But a latent poison lurked in each, and embittered the sweets which ought to arise from such an agreeable commerce. Sometimes they would sit, for an hour together, with no other conversation but their sighs, which they echoed constantly, without being able to enquire into, or communicate, the cause of each other's grief. At length the marchioness broke through the constraint.

How many troubles, my dear Lucilia, said she, should we avoid by a mutual confidence. We encrease our anguish, in endeavouring to hide it. Can a real friend conceal a secret, nay a thought, from one who is her real friend?

A modest blush over-spread Lucilia's cheeks, and her lovely eyes were suddenly shaded with the beautiful lashes of their lids. Ah! why, resumed the marchioness, this confusion? why do you blush? 'tis happiness alone that ought to give such colouring to beauty. Oh! speak, my dear Lucilia; disburthen your heart, and pour forth your distress into the bosom of a faithful friend, who, perhaps, is more to be pitied than yourself; and yet should find some alleviation to her sorrows, could she but soften yours.—Ah! Madam, what have you required? I sympathize in all your pains, but I have no return to make. The languor in which you see me droop, is the mere effect of want of health; I decay gradually, and heaven, O heaven be prais'd! methinks I feel that the term of my misery is very near.

She

She uttered these last words with a sweet, innocent smile, that pierced her lovely friend to the very soul. Is that, said she, your only consolation? impatient of death, your life is a burthen? How long have you been in this retreat?—These four years past.—Was it constraint that forced you hither?—Whatever brought me here, 'twas reason fixt my stay; 'twas heaven's guardian goodness that vouchsafed to attract my heart, —Your heart! Why, was it then attached to the world?—It was indeed, to my continual anguish.—Proceed.—I have told you all.—Ah! Lucilia, you was in love, and could you consent to be buried here alive? What perfidious wretch could abandon such perfections?—You are mistaken, madam; no man on earth was ever more tender, more constant, or deserved more to be loved and esteemed. Enquire no further; behold these guilty gushing tears; guilty they are that flow from worldly cares, when I have devoted myself to heaven. The cruel recollection opens all my wounds afresh.—No, no, Lucilia, you have said too much not to say more; my tender friendship shall pour into those wounds the balm of comfort; bewailing blunts the sting of grief, which silence renders more acute; it must have vent. The smother'd fire, if not quite extinguished, bursts into a fiercer flame.—Ah! dear madam, you insist upon it; weep then for your poor unfortunate Lucilia, weep for her life, as you quickly will for her death.

I no sooner was introduced into the world than these poor features, such as they are, drew the eyes and attention of a crowd of lovers, whose addresses gave me nor pride, nor pain, nor pleasure. I own there was one among the number who widely differed from the rest. Amiable in
his

his person, a soul endued with innate virtue and unaffected sincerity; I was soon convinced that my heart was susceptible of tenderness. Equality of age, rank and fortune, the great intimacy of our families, but more, much more, our mutual desires, all, all concurred to cement our inclination. My lover lived for me alone; we looked down with pity and disdain on the vast vacuity of the world, where pleasure seemed a fleeting shadow, and love but a faint glimmering; full of ourselves, our hearts. . . . But where am I bewilder'd? Ah? marchioness, what scenes have you obliged me to recal?—And where is the harm, my charming friend? Is it a reproach to have acted consistent with truth and honour? When heaven forms two virtuous hearts, as if on purpose to be joined together, can it be deemed a crime to attract and captivate each other? Or to what end were they framed with such dispositions?—No doubt, Madam, but heaven created with pleasure a heart so pure, wherein mine was totally absorbed; where virtue waited not for reason's guidance, where nature had displayed her utmost fondness, nor left occasion for a single wish. Was there ever maiden yet beloved like me? The delicacy of his mind equalled the tenderness of his heart. I durst not shew any of those slight agitations, those little inquietudes, that sometimes will ruffle the happiest, calmest temper, for fear of giving him uneasiness. If the smallest cloud appeared in my eyes, it seemed to him as if all nature was eclipsed; he would fancy some dreadful consequence, and took upon himself the blame of all my frailties. It is easily conceived to what excess so sweet, so loving a youth was beloved again. But, alas! interest that dissolves all ties, except those of real love,

sowed

sowed the seeds of division in our families. A bill in chancery filed against my mother, was the fatal source of all our misfortunes. The mutual animosity of our parents threatened an eternal obstacle to our happiness. We were obliged to part. The letter he wrote to me on that occasion will be ever present to my memory.

‘ My dearest Lucilia, all is lost; I am undone: I am torn from my soul’s only joy! Prostrate at my father’s feet, which I wet with my tears, I conjured him by all his fondness for me, and my future happiness, to drop this vexatious law-suit; he treated me like a child. In vain I protested that my Lucilia’s fortune was dearer to me than my own; my disinterestedness is deem’d a folly. Can men conceive no blessing above riches? What is wealth to me, if we must part? They tell me that I shall be some day glad not to have been listened to. Oh! never, never; if I thought that length of time could ever so far degrade my soul, I would, to avoid so shocking a prospect, die this moment. No, no, my dear Lucilia, all I have, all I am, is yours. The law may allot me part of your fortune; I know no law but that of my heart, where certainly my father will be cast. Heaven forbid that I should harbour a guilty thought! I would shorten my days if I could add them to his; but if I live to possess those accumulated riches which he will heap on me against my inclination, your loss would be soon repaired. In the mean time I am deprived of all that my soul adores. Ah! who knows but they may attempt to dispose of to another a heart you have avouched to be mine. O never consent; remember that my life is link’d to my love, and that our vows are registered in heaven. Can you resist the stern commands of

an imperious mother? In the name of our mutual passion set my disconsolate heart at rest, and leave me no room to despair.'—You returned an answer I suppose.—I did, in a very few words.

'You are not to blame; I am most unhappy, but I will strive to bear my misfortune; learn of me to endure.'

The law, however, took its course with equal heat on both sides. One day, O day of misery! as my mother was perusing a decree that made her shudder, a person desired to speak with me. Who is it, said she? Bid him come in. The servant, surprised and embarrassed, was inconsistent in his answers, and at last owned he was charged with a note for me. A note for my daughter! pray from whom? I was present; do but think of my situation, and think of my mother's rage and indignation, when she heard it came from the son of him she called her persecutor. Had she deigned to have read the contents of the note, which she sent back unopened, it might have softened her obdurate heart. She would have seen at least that virtue's self was not purer than our sentiments. But whether the vexation in which this law-suit had plunged her, wanted only a pretext to vent itself on others, or whether a secret correspondence between her daughter and the son of her opposer appeared to her a crime; she loaded me with the most opprobrious terms. I threw myself at her feet, and bore with humiliation her severe reproaches, as if I really had deserved them. It was instantly determined to confine me in a cloyster, and there hide what she called my dishonour and her own. The next day I was conducted hither, and strict orders were given not to let me
see

see any body. Three months I passed in this miserable situation, as if the world and all my connexions were annihilated. The first and only visit I received was from my mother. My boding heart foretold, while she embraced me, the shocking sentence she was going to pronounce. I am ruined, said she, as soon as we are alone; injustice has prevailed; I have lost my cause, and with it the means of providing for you in the world. My son will barely have wherewithal to support his birth and rank. As for you, my child, God has called you hither, and here you are to live and die. To-morrow you take the veil. At these words, uttered with an absolute tone, my heart forgot to beat, my tongue its faculty, my knees bent under me, I sunk down and fainted away. My mother called for assistance, and seized that opportunity to withdraw, and be no longer a witness to those agonies she was resolved not to relieve. When I recovered my senses, I was surrounded by those holy virgins with whom I was soon to be initiated. They all invited, pressed me to share with them that sweet serenity of mind inseparable from their state of life. But, alas! that happy state, which they enjoyed with innocence, presented nothing to my disordered mind but a continual struggle; perjury, shame, and remorse. Ah! thought I, what will be my lover's fate and mine? A profound gulf is opening to divide us for ever. These reflections depressed my already too afflicted soul; all about me seemed a solitude, horror, silence, a nothingness. In this distracted condition I found myself before the throne of the Almighty, with a heart full of the dear object I am ordered to forget. The daughters of piety

ex-

exhorted me with the greatest sincerity and warmest wishes, to think no more of what little they knew of the vanities of the world. What was the world to me? The most dreary desert would have been a seat of bliss, possess of him whom I am for ever forced to resign, to that world which without him I despise. At my earnest request my mother condescended to return: she feigned to believe that my swoon was no more than a common accident of nature. No, madam, said I, it was the effect of the cruel situation to which you have reduced me. 'Tis high time to lay aside dissimulation; to you I owe my existence, destroy it if you please. But did you conceive me, foster me in your bosom, only to be a victim devoted to a lingering, but certain death? To whom am I sacrificed? Not to God, I feel he rejects me. He is a jealous God, he accepts of no offerings but such as proceed from a willing heart, that is full of him, and him alone. If violence drags me to the altar, who are my attendants? Perjury and sacrilege.—Ah wretched girl! what have you said?—A truth which my despair has forced me to reveal. Yes, I own I did dispose of my heart without your approbation; innocent or guilty, I am no more the mistress of it, for heaven only can dissolve the knot with which it is united.—Hence, unworthy daughter! Hence, I say! I disclaim thee.—Ah! my mother, if that tender name has power to move, recal your former fondness, abandon me not to sorrow and desperation. The gates of heaven are shut against me.—And is it thus a foolish passion prompts you to fly from this asylum, this secure harbour for innocence and virtue! What is the world which you regret? where interest is the only idol that claims adoration.

tion. Be rich and powerful, all will pay you homage. The portion of the poor and unfortunate is to be neglected, forsaken, forgot.—Ah, madam, distinguish from that corrupted race of mortals the man—I understand, the man you love, is it not? I well imagine all that he has said to you. He was not an accomplice in the iniquitous proceedings of his father; he disowns them, he pities you, and promises to redress your wrongs. Words of course! vain protestations of unthinking youth! But suppose him constant in his love, and true to his vows; his father is far from the decline of life; he will grow old; the wicked live. Love dwindles away, ambition dazzles, honour commands; and duty obeys a post of rank; a grand alliance, a large fortune, all join to obliterate a poor, credulous, unhappy maid, whose story is bandied about to amuse an ill-natured world. From that misfortune I have rescued you. I am at present the seeming cause of all your grief; but the time will come when you will heap benedictions on me. Farewel, my child, prepare yourself to make the offering that heaven demands; the greater the sacrifice, the more the merit.

What could I do, my dear marchioness? I had no refuge left; I was reduced to comply. I took the veil. I entered the paths of penitence; and during this time of probation, whilst liberty is still our own, I flattered myself to gain a triumph over my heart. I could not help attributing my irresolution to the faint glimmerings of the wretch's last resource, hopes of a reprieve. Thus wavering between love and duty, the conflict was too great for my weak faculties to bear. In this dejection I determined to make the irrevocable vow. I did. I renounced the world; that

was

was nothing. I renounced my lover ; and that was more than to renounce my life. In taking the solemn, sacred oath, my soul faltered with my lips ; with much difficulty I dragged myself to the altar ; I was carried back expiring. My mother, transported to have gained her point, could not conceal her barbarous joy. Pardon me, O my God ! I respect and love her still, and shall respect and love her as long as I live. This narration was often interrupted by her sighs, whilst the tears streamed down her lovely cheeks. All was over, resumed Lucilia, after a pensive silence. The sacrifice was consummated. I had now no connexion with myself ; I was devoted to heaven. All earthly ties were dissolved, I was dead to the world. I strove to believe it. But oh ! what was my distraction, when I ventured to look back into my heart ; I found it still teeming with love ; not that innocent passion which it formerly harboured ; but love in all its furious transports. Love revolted against heaven, against nature, against myself ! consumed with lamentations, tortured with remorse, and bordering on frenzy. What have I done ? a thousand times I cried, what have I done ? The dear, dear object, which I no more must see, is always present to my mind ; the union of our hands, as well as hearts, which was to have sealed our happiness, never quits my thoughts. The pleasing ideas of love and joy, my promised allotted portion, now only serve to enhance my distress, and aggravate my loss. These four years past have been one continual struggle. I endeavour with all my power to banish his lovely image from my remembrance ; vainly I endeavour ; the charming form haunts me where-ever I go. I fly from sleep, that never fails to represent him with all his fondness. I meet him in the deepest recess

of

of solitude ; I find him at the foot of the altar ; nay, I even behold him in the bosom of my God. But oh ! that gracious God has at last, in his unbounded clemency, taken pity on me. Time, reason, and patience have calmed the tempest of a turbulent passion. But a painful decay supplies its place. I die daily ; and the soothing thought of my near approach to my grave, is the only satisfaction I can taste.

Alas ! said the marchioness, when she had heard Lucilia's story, which of us two is most to be pitied ? Love is the cause of your distress and mine ; but oh ! what difference ! You loved the most tender, faithful of lovers ; I fixed my inclination on the most perfidious, ungrateful man that ever existed. You devoted yourself to heaven ; I gave myself to the vilest person on earth. Your retreat is a triumph ; mine, tho' I am guiltless, overwhelms me with shame. You are justly pitied, loved and respected ; I am unjustly betrayed, traduced and aspersed.

The marquis of Clarence, before marriage, was in my eyes the most amiable of all mankind, young, handsome, sprightly, endowed with every qualification of mind and form, to captivate whomsoever he pleased. It was an easy task, with so many perfections, to raise in my unexperienced, unsuspecting heart a passion equal to that he feigned, or which perhaps at that time he really had for me. Birth, fortune, age, all were conducive to our mutual happiness. Our parents, who saw with pleasure our rising inclination, soon cemented our union. Two years were past in one constant state of bliss ; when some affairs of consequence called my husband up to Paris, where I accompanied him. O fatal metropolis ! theatre of vice and folly ! thou wreck

wreck of innocence, love and virtue! Here it was the marquis, who had seldom frequented those of his own age, and then only, as he said, for an amusement, and to laugh at their follies and impertinence; 'twas there that he launched out amongst a set of young unthinking rakes; there he caught the infection from their contagious example. The noisy bustle of their insipid meetings, the mysterious revealing of their secret adventures, the proud, ungenerous boasting of their infamous triumphs, the encomiums so wantonly bestowed on the unworthy objects of their licentious passions, all joined to excite my husband's curiosity, and perhaps something more. The ties of our innocent, happy union, were loosened; I had no longer any binding charms, nor means to please, but such as proceeded from a virtuous education. I too plainly perceived the alteration. I am undone, said I to myself, my loving heart is not sufficient for his. Nothing remains but certain cold regard, a mere decorum, the forerunners of indifference and neglect. Those delicious effusions of our souls, those happy conversations, once so rapturous, are all forsaken, to hurry along with the ebb and flow of a tumultuous vicious society. He would now and then excite me to amuse myself in the world; but that was only to authorise his own dissipations. I grew more anxious, was more pressing. I found I constrained him. I then resolved to let him have his will and take his course, in hopes that the comparison, which I thought must prove in my favour, would open his eyes, and make him return with more ardour to my arms. I was mistaken; his loose disorderly companions had taken too fast a hold. They led astray his unwary yielding temper; and when once his lips

H

had

had touched the poisonous fyren cup, he was intoxicated for ever. I fain would have recalled him back to virtue, it was too late. Oh! my dear lord, I cry'd, you run to certain ruin. Altho' 'tis desolation to my soul to find your heart estranged from mine, yet I less deplore my own wretched situation, than I grieve for yours; you seek for happiness where it never was found. Those wanton joys and fleeting pleasures of a disgraceful passion can never suit a heart like yours: the art to seduce and to betray is the art of that world which enchants you. Your spouse knows it not; nor are you in reality more acquainted with it. Your deluded heart is led astray by a false meteor, which will soon disappear, and the illusion vanish away like the vapours of a dream. Then will you return to my constant heart, which you will find the same you left it. Indulgent love and conjugal fidelity shall wait for you; and all your failings be forgot. You need not apprehend complaint or reproach; happy if I can but comfort you for having been the cause of my sorrows. You that have tasted the charms, and know the value of virtue; you that vice may, perhaps, plunge to the lowest pitch of misery; and when incapable to wallow any longer in riot, come back covered with confusion to the bosom of your forsaken wife, and there hide the infirmities of premature old age. Your heart depressed with grief, and wrung with remorse, how can you be reconciled to yourself? How taste again the joys of pure love? That love, alas! will be your punishment, when you reflect on the guilty pleasures for which you abandon it. That, that, my dear marquis, is, the piercing arrow that wounds my heart. Cease to love me; I consent since I have ceased to please you.

you. But oh, my husband ! never so far forget yourself as to be unworthy of my tenderness. Would you believe it, my dear Lucilia ? a poor witticism was all his answer. He told me with a sneer, that I preached like an angel, and that it ought to be printed. But seeing my eyes starting with tears, pr'ythee, said he, don't behave like a child ; let me amuse myself, and rest assured that I have no attachment.

However, some over-officious friends took care to inform me of every thing that could aggravate my grief. My husband himself at length threw off the mask, tired with constraint and dissimulation. I shall not relate to you many mortifications and indignities I underwent. Your sufferings would appear light compared with mine. Picture to your mind the situation of a virtuous and tender wife, full of delicacy, and scrupulous to an excess, who every day receives fresh insults from one she dotes upon ; who even now lives for him alone, altho' he be dead to her ; and does not blush to spend his days amidst a set of wretches branded with infamy, the just objects of scorn and detestation. I must spare your modesty the representation of the greatest horrors of this shocking scene. Neglected, ill treated, abandoned by my husband ; I nursed my grief in silent retirement ; and if I was a subject of raillery to the depraved, ill-natured part of the world, the public in general, more just and compassionate, pitied my forlorn condition. I enjoyed the only blessing the vicious had not yet deprived me of, a spotless reputation. But even that now is calumniously aspersed. The wickedness of some women, to whom my example was a censure, could not bear to see me

"blameless. Envy and malice have prevailed. My retirement and seeming tranquillity are interpreted into what they please; and I am accused of having a familiarity with whatever wretch has the effrontery to insinuate so scandalous a falsehood. My husband, to whom my presence was a continual reproach, seized this first pretence, however ill grounded, to get rid of me. He ordered me down to one of his country seats. There, unknown and retired from the world, I had at least the pensive liberty to vent my sighs, and wet my solitude with my tears. Even that sad consolation is now denied me; he sent me word to retire into a convent; for that he had sold the Florival estate. Florival! said Lucilia, interrupting with great emotion. Yes, replied the marchioness, it was there I was exiled.— Ah! Madam, what name have you pronounced? —Why, that which my husband bore, before he purchased the estate and title of Clarence.— What do I hear? O heaven! just heaven, is it possible! cry'd out Lucilia, throwing herself into her friend's arms.—What is the matter? why this sudden revolution? recal your senses, my dear Lucilia; tell me, were you acquainted with Florival?—I was indeed; he is the very man to whom my soul was attached, whose loss I have wept these four years past, and should have deplored to my last parting breath. Ah! Madam, what would have been my fate! At these words Lucilia fell prostrate on her knees; O my God! she cry'd, my gracious God! you stretched out your providential hand to snatch me from desperation. The marchioness could scarce recover from her surprize. Ah! my dear fellow-sufferer, said she, the designs of the Almighty are manifestly visible. He unites us, inspires us with a mutual

mutual confidence, and opens our hearts for each other as two springs, from whence flow the streams of comfort and tranquillity. Come, my worthy, tender, deserving friend, let us endeavour to forget our woes, and the cruel author of them.

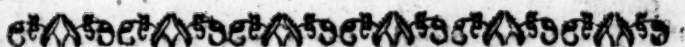
From that moment they were connected by the most intimate ties of virtuous friendship. Their solitude produced a certain pleasure which none but the unhappy can feel. This calm was soon ruffled by an express that arrived, informing the marchioness that her husband lay dangerously ill. His irregularities cost him his life. But before he dies, he earnestly requests to see once more his virtuous spouse. At this summons she quits her afflicted companion, and flies on the wings of expedition. She found him in his last agonies. Dear, tender creature, said he in a feeble tone, you that I have treated with such inhumanity, can you forgive your dying repentant husband? Behold the consequences of a debauched life. The hand of God has smote me; my wounds are shocking! Oh! if you think me not quite unworthy of your pity, raise, oh! raise your innocent hands and voice, and intercede for my pardon. The marchioness, in this distressed condition, was for throwing herself in his arms. Approach me not, he cry'd, I am loathsome to myself. My polluted breath is the breath of sin and death. After some pause, he resumed again; can you thus, pale and livid as I am, trace me out in this vile state, to which my criminal follies have reduced me? Am I that once happy half of yourself? Is this the pure unsullied soul that was transfused with yours? And is this the happy nuptial bed I entered, when I was worthy of your love? Oh! perfidious, unthinking friends!

and you detestable syrens, come, behold and tremble! Who shall deliver my soul from its hideous prison? Then turning to his physician, How long have I to linger? my pains are intolerable. Leave me not, my dear generous spouse; let me not lose sight of you, lest I relapse into despair. Haste, cruel death, O haste and put an end to my torments, and to my life; I deserve them all; I that vilified, dishonoured, persecuted the best of wives. The marchioness, in the convulsions of grief, struggled to get near his bed, but was prevented by those about her. In short, he expired; and his last feeble faltering words were, Oh! pardon, pard—

The only comfort the marchioness of Clarence could then receive was the firm hopes that a repentance so sincere could not fail to find the forgiveness he implored. He was, thought she, more weak than wicked; guilty from example rather than by choice. The world led him astray in pursuit of fancied pleasure; heaven has brought him back, by real pain chastised him, and forgives. Yes, my Clarence, yes, my dear husband! I believe that your soul, now disengaged from all earthly dross, waits for mine in the blest regions of immortality.

Full of these religious sentiments, she returned to her friend, whom she found kneeling at her usual devotions. Lucilia's tender, sympathising heart could not refrain from bewailing the marquis's terrible, tho' pious, death. They wept together for the last time. The marchioness of Clarence bound herself by the same solemn vows that Lucilia had made; and devoted to heaven those charms, that heart, that virtue, which the world was not worthy to possess.

ALL



ALL OR NOTHING.

A MORAL TALE.

AT that time of life when it is a most charming thing to be a widow, Cecilia had not laid aside the thoughts of engaging herself again. Two rivals were in competition for her choice. One was modest and sincere, who loved her and her alone; the other was artful and vain, and only loved himself. The first had Cecilia's esteem, the second had her love. Cecilia, you will say, was very injudicious: not at all. Your *naïve* people are generally modest and indolent. They fancy, because that their inclination is really sincere, that it must of course be agreeable. But there are very few which in one shape or other don't want a little setting off. A man that appears in the polite world without a little artifice, is like a woman at the play-house without a little *rouge*.

Eraсте, with his natural frankness, had told Cecilia that he was in love with her, and from that moment he loved her just in the same manner as he breathed; for his love and his life were linked together. Floricour, of a different temper, made himself agreeable by an airy, gallant, genteel behaviour that seemed to have no pretensions. His addresses to Cecilia were not the most passionate, but they were the most seducing. Nothing affected, nothing earnest; he seemed

the more agreeable as he appeared to be so without design.

Erasme was pitied ; there was not an honefter man in the world, and it was a pity he could not be beloved. Floricour was rather dreaded ; he was a dangerous man, one who perhaps might make a woman unfortunate ; but how resist him ? Nevertheless it was determined not to deceive Erasme ; he must and should be informed of all.

I esteem you, Erasme, said Cecilia to him ; I know you deserve a much better treatment from me. But the heart is whimsical, and mine will not listen to reason. I understand you, reply'd Erasme, with great temper, but with tears in his eyes, your reason pleads in my behalf, and your love in another's.—I own it is so, with concern I own it ; I should be much to blame if I was free to choofe : but inclination admits of no controul.—Mighty well, Madam, I must then love alone ; it will be more meritorious.—That is the very thing I would not have.—Nor I neither, if I could help it.—What will become of you then ?—Whatever love and nature please.—You put me quite out of patience, Erasme, with this giving yourself up.—I must of necessity give myself up when I have no hopes to hold by.—I am very unhappy ever to have known you ! To be sure you are vastly to be pitied ; it is so great a misfortune to be loved.—Yes, it is a real one, to be loved where you can only return esteem ; it is a continual reproach.—You have nothing to reproach yourself with ; a man of honour and probity has a right to complain of a coquette that makes a fool of him ; or rather she is below his complaints or regret ; but you, Madam, in what are you to blame ? Have you
em-

employed any seducing arts to inveigle me? any allurements to retain me? Is there any thing that can compel you to like me, any more than I can be forced not to love you? Follow your inclinations, and I shall follow mine. Don't be afraid of my ever giving you any uneasiness.—Aye, but you will be uneasy; for I suppose you have no intention to leave me.—Why, would you be so cruel as to forbid me seeing you?—No, far from it, I assure you; but then I must see you easy and tranquil, on the footing of a sincere friend.—Friend let it be; the name is of no manner of signification.—But the bare name is not enough; I want to restore you in earnest to that pure, solid and tender sentiment, to that real friendship, such as I feel for you.—Dear Madam, I don't pretend to constrain your way of loving; and pray give me leave to love you as I can, and as much as I can. I only desire the liberty of being unhappy without controul.

This obstinacy of Erasme gave Cecilia a good deal of concern; but after all, she had done her part; and if he will continue to love her, he must even take the consequence to himself. She therefore yielded to her inclination for Floricour, without trouble or restraint. All that the most refined gallantry could put in practice, with the most enchanting artifice, was employed to captivate her heart. Floricour succeeded without taking much pains. He had found out the secret to please; he thought he was in love; and it was his own fault if he was not made happy. But self-love is the bane of love. It was not sufficient for Floricour to be loved more than all the world besides; he must be loved solely, entirely, and without reserve. It is true that he gave the example. For he forsook for Cecilia's

fake a prude that he had ruined, and a coquette that was ruining him. And then he broke off acquaintance with half a dozen of his companions, the greatest coxcombs, fribbles and fools that existed. He supped seldom any where but at Cecilia's, where the entertainment was always elegant, and he had the condescension to be attentive to her alone amidst a circle of ladies, not one of whom equaled her either in sense or beauty. Such an uncommon behaviour, not to mention other uncommon qualifications, how could they fail of laying Cecilia under his absolute power?

However as he had not love enough to neglect his cunning, he took great care at first to hide his pretensions. It was impossible for any one to be more obliging, more complying, less exacting, than Floricour before his conquest; but he no sooner got possession of her heart, than he became its tyrant. Arrogant, jealous, over-bearing, untractable; he must have entirely under his command all the faculties of Cecilia's soul. He could not bear that she should have a single idea that did not correspond with his own, and much less a sentiment if he had not given rise to it. A settled taste, or any constant connections, were sure to put him out of humour; and still it must be guessed what it was that displeased him. Twenty times must he be asked the reason of his revery and seeming discontent; it was mere complaisance if he vouchsafed to own, that such a thing was disagreeable, and such a person quite tiresome. In short, when he found he had gained so great an ascendant, he pronounced his will as a law; it was submitted to without opposition. Yet it was not enough to satisfy his domineering temper, that Cecilia gave up those common so-
cial

cial amusements which came of course; he would often pretend to give her some extraordinary entertainment, on purpose to have it sacrificed to his caprice. Some new play, or other diversion, was talked of with great praise, and he invited Cecilia to partake of it. The party is made with such ladies as he thought proper; she was dressed accordingly; the horses are put to; 'tis time to set out. No: his mind is changed, and she must pretend a head-ach, and send excuses. He introduced an acquaintance of his to Cecilia, as one of the most agreeable ladies in the world: Cecilia thought her so, and was glad of her company. In less than a week he owned that he had been mistaken; for that she was an affected, giddy, insipid creature; and the sooner they were rid of her the better.

Cecilia was very soon reduced to a small circle of visitors, and those he thought rather came too often. She did not as yet perceive that her compliance was changed into a downright slavery. When we submit to the will of those we like, one is apt to imagine that we are following our own inclinations. She fancied that Floricour only anticipated her desires, whilst he was fulfilling merely his own. She sacrificed every thing to him, without thinking that she sacrificed any thing. But Floricour's self-love was not yet satisfied.

The amusements and societies in town, trifling and temporary as they were, still remain an object of importance. He expatiated on the delights of a retired life, and repeated over and over, that there were no real pleasures for lovers but in the country, far from bustle and dissipation; that for his part, he should never be
happy

happy but in a retreat inaccessible to all impertinent intruders. Cecilia had a country-seat, such as he desired, and would willingly pass with him there the fine part of the season; but how could she do it with decency? That objection was easily removed. Nothing more fit to obviate the notion of a *tête à tête*, than to invite such a friend as Erasme, and such a companion as Artinice, a lady of unblemished character; and, after all, if the busy tongue of scandal should mutter, their approaching nuptials would soon silence it. The party was agreed on, Floricour's singling out Erasme, was the quintessence of self-love. He knew that he was his rival, his unhappy rival. It gratified his pride to have him be a witness to his triumph, and he settled his scheme accordingly. The regard and pretended attentions he shewed him, were accompanied with an air of superiority and compassion, that sometimes put Erasme almost out of patience. But the tender friendship and obliging behaviour of Cecilia, made him amends for those mortifications; and the fear of giving her pain, obliged him to disguise what he felt. How was it possible, one would naturally think, that Erasme, convinced as he was, that their retirement into the country was merely for the sake of loving without constraint; how was it possible, I say, that he should ever consent to accompany them? Cecilia made the same reflection; she would have been glad to have prevented it, but Floricour had planned the party, and there was no objecting to it; and, after all, Artinice was young and very agreeable, and who knew but that retirement, liberty, opportunity, example, and perhaps jealousy and resentment, might induce Erasme to turn his addresses to her, which he knew Cecilia could no longer admit of?

Cecilia

Cecilia was so modest, in regard to herself, as to think she might easily be forgot for another, and she was just enough as to wish it might so happen. But that was forgetting the character and sentiments of Erasfe.

Artinice was a lady of that stamp who looked upon love as one of the conveniences of society. Impatient of a too long obsequious respect, she could not bear with the dull formality of what is called a constant lover. She was one of those who depend so much on the honour and probity of men, as to give themselves up to them without reserve, and quit them without discretion or regard. Cecilia told her they were going to spend some time in the country; Erasfe accompanies us, will you make one? With all my heart, replied Artinice, smiling; the party is not amiss; and so the affair was settled, which was an additional vexation to Erasfe. Artinice had often heard Cecilia launch out in commendation of her friend, as one of the most prudent, sensible, and reserved men in the world. This is delightful, thought Artinice, 'tis the very thing cut out for me; one that you may take or leave without precaution or clamour. Happy, or unhappy, that is out of the question; nothing more commodiously agreeable; why, such a man as Erasfe was a great prize in the lottery! a treasure! You may imagine, that with these reflections, every allurements was put in practice to captivate him.

Florincour paid an assiduous courtship to Cecilia; very disagreeable for an unhappy rival to behold. In vain Cecilia endeavoured to disguise her thoughts; they pierced thro' every action; her looks, her voice, her very silence, betrayed them. Erasfe was on the rack, but he smothered his vexation.

ation. Artinice, like one that knew what she was about, withdrew from them on purpose, and beckoned Erasste to follow her. How happy are these lovers ! said she ; full of each other they want no other company ; they live only for themselves ; what a blessing it is to love ! don't you think so ? To be sure, Madam, answered Erasste, casting down his eyes, it is a very great blessing when there are two that partake of it.—What do you mean by two ? Why, there are always two, I don't know any body alone in the world.—I mean, Madam, two hearts of equal sensibility, formed to love each other equally.—Equally ! that is a little hard ! for my part, I think that there is no necessity of being quite so difficult, and that one might be content with a something near it. What ! because that I should happen to have more feeling in my temper than he who pays his addresses to me ; must I make him suffer for it ? No, each gives what he has ; and they are not to be blamed who furnish the whole portion of sensibility which they have received from nature. I cannot but admire how, in general, the coldest hearts are the most scrupulous. As for example, you yourself, would you expect that one should be passionately fond of you ?—I, Madam ! I expect nothing.—You mistake me, that is not what I mean. You are certainly a man that may expect to please any woman, even the most difficult ; nor should I be surprized to see one fall in love with you.—That might happen ; I am never surprized at any folly I see committed ; but if any body should be so weak as to fall in love with me, I am afraid she would be much to be pitied.—Is that a piece of advice, Sir, that you are so kind as to give me ? —To

—To you, Madam! I flatter myself that you don't take me for so great a fool, or so great a fop as to pretend to give you any such advice.—Mighty well; you talk in general, and I am excepted out of politeness. The exception, Madam, is quite needless, when you are out of the question.—Excuse me, Sir, 'twas I that said that you have wherewithal to please, and that one might be very much in love with you; and you make answer, that whoever fell in love with you, would be much to be pitied; I think that nothing can be more personal. What say you? you seem out of countenance.—I own, Madam, that the raillery embarrasses me; nor can I tell how to make a reply. It is not generous to attack me with arms that I am unacquainted with.—And what if I spoke seriously, Erasfe, and that nothing was more sincere;—I give it up, madam, there is no withstanding this; the situation in which I am does not permit me to amuse you any longer. He has it, that's certain, said she, looking at him as he withdrew; that air of levity, and laughing tone which I assumed, have piqued him. He is one I find that must have sentiments; I shall talk to him to-morrow in his own strain; another turn in the garden and my conquest is sure.

Cecilia imagined that Artinice and Erasfe had taken a very long walk. Erasfe returned quite thoughtful, and Artinice with an air of triumph. Well, what do you think of him? said Cecilia, whispering her friend.—Why, pretty well, he did not tire me, and that's a great deal; he has good qualities; he may be made something of. He is indeed a little romantic in his notions; he must have sentiments forsooth; want of knowing better! a prejudice of education!

on ! of which he may be easily cured: *He must have sentiments!* said Cecilia to herself; what, are they already upon terms ! methinks it is going a great length in a first interview. Eraste takes his resolution with a good grace ! But what if he is satisfied, what is it to me ? However, it was not right or kind in him to endeavour to persuade me that he was so much to be pitied ; he might have spared my delicacy the painful reproaches that he knew I made myself on his account. But it is the folly of lovers to exaggerate their sufferings. In short, he is comforted, and I am eased of an incumbrance.

With this notion Cecilia laid less restraint on her behaviour to Floricour. Eraste, whom nothing escaped, grew more melancholy than usual. Both Cecilia and Artinice attributed his dejection to the same cause ; a growing passion has generally that effect. Next day Artinice did not fail of procuring the lovers a *tête à tête*, in obliging Eraste to take a walk with her in the garden.

You are angry with me, said she, pray let us make it up and be reconciled ; I see that you are not one of those with whom love is to be treated with pleasantry ; you look upon it in a serious light, and I esteem you the more for it.—I ! Madam, not at all ; I am well convinced that there is nothing so preposterous as a serious attachment, and that love affords no pleasure when once it becomes in earnest.—Pray be of a piece with yourself ; yesterday you were for having an equal sensibility, a mutual inclination.—I was for having then a thing next to impossible ; the thing in the world the rarest to be met with. And yet I am of opinion, that without this conformity so difficult to be found, and which we are not to expect, the wisest and surest way is to think
slightly

slightly of love, without fixing on it a chimerical value, and an unwarrantable importance.—Now, Erasste, you talk to the purpose. For really, wherefore give one's self an ineffectual trouble in striving to love more than one can? The thing speaks of itself; you like one another, bring matters to bear, grow tired, and so separate. After all, one has had one's pleasure, and it was time well employed. For my part, would to heaven one could be so well employed as long as we live. You are, thought Erasste to himself, of a mighty complying temper. I perceive, continued she, that there is nothing so dull and melancholy as what is called a serious passion. Jealousy, uneasiness, take possession of two miserable beings; they imagine that they are sufficient for themselves, and fatigue one another to death.—Ah! Madam, what do you say? nothing can be wanting to complete their happiness, if they really love each other. Such an union is the charm of life, the delight of the soul, and the plenitude of happiness.—Indeed, Sir, one would almost fancy that you was crazy, with your eternal inconsistencies and extravagancies. Pray tell me what it is that you would have?—What is not yet found, and perhaps never will.—A very fine expectation truly! and in the mean while your heart is to lie idle!—I wish to God it could.—Why, Erasste! does it not?—No, indeed, Madam; you would commiserate its condition, were you sensible of it. At these words he retired, looking up to heaven, and fetching a deep sigh. This is then, said Arтинice, one of your reserved folks! Really he is so much so, as to be downright a simpleton. Happily I did not thoroughly explain myself. May be I should have spoken my mind more clearly;

clearly; these timorous people must be excited. But he runs from me upon a single exclamation, without so much as giving one time to ask what it is that embarrasses and troubles him. I must see it out. I shall make him declare himself; for in short I am engaged in it, and my honour is at stake.

Floricour, during supper, had a mind to be merry at Erasste's expence. Well, said he, to Artinice, whereabouts are you? You ought to hide nothing from your friends; you see we shew you the example. Pshaw, reply'd Artinice with some warmth, can we reap advantage from any example? Do we even know what we would have? Talk to him of a serious passion, and my gentleman makes a joke of it; if you join in the laugh, he treats it seriously. It is very easy for you, Madam, said Erasste, to turn me into ridicule; you are very welcome to do it.—That is not my design I assure you; and, as we are amongst friends, let us come to an explanation without further mystery. We have not time to lose in observing and guessing each other. You like me, at least you have given me room to think so; and I don't deny but that I look upon you as very suitable in every respect; we are not here to be useless spectators; nay, civility even demands that we should be amused as well as others. Let us make an end on't, and come to a right understanding. In what manner do you intend to make love to me? How would you have me to love you?—I! Madam, I don't desire that you should love me!—Not desire it, Sir! then you have deceived me.—Upon my honour I have not deceived you; I never mentioned to you a single word that had any tendency to love. This is too much, said she, rising from table, this is a
piece

piece of insolence that there is no accounting for. Floricour did what he could to persuade her to stay.—No, Sir, 'tis not to be borne, I can't endure the sight of a man that has the assurance to disown the dull and insipid declarations with which he fatigued me, and which I had the patience and good-nature to bear with; prejudiced by the praises bestowed, I don't know for what, on such a maukish creature.

Next day Cecilia informed Eraste, that Artinice had left them in a fury. Pray, what passed between you?—Nothing, Madam, mere idle talk; the result of which was that I laid down as a maxim, that the thing the most to be dreaded was a serious passion; and that nothing was so despicable as a frivolous one. Artinice heard my sigh, and thought, I suppose, that I sigh'd for her. I undeceiv'd her, that's all.—You undeceiv'd her! that was doing the part of a man of honour; but then you should have done it less abruptly, and with a little more circumspection.—How, Madam! when she had almost, I won't say the assurance to tell you that we were upon terms of loving one another, would you have me be moderate? What would you have thought of my acknowledging it, or of my silence?—I should have thought that you behaved like a reasonable man, and acted as you ought. Artinice is handsome, and not past her bloom; and had it been only by way of amusement—O! dear Madam, I am not in a humour to be amused; and I entreat it as a favour not to give me such advice as I certainly shall never follow.—But reflect a little, my good friend, on the critical situation we are in. You are now left alone with us, and you certainly feel what a very odd part you must necessarily act of course.—I shall perform

form the part that you have given me leave to act, that of a friend. Can any thing be more unexceptionable?—Erasfe, it is impossible, you never can support the character.—That is my affair; don't you be uneasy at it.—I must be uneasy at it, for I know what you suffer; your condition is dreadful.—It may be so; but it is not either in your power or mine to alter it for the better; and believe me, 'tis best to talk no more about it.—Talk no more about it! that's easily said; but in the mean time you are unhappy, and I am the cause of it.—Why, no, Madam, I have told you a hundred times that you have no reproach to make yourself; for goodness sake, for friendship sake, rest satisfied.—I should if I was convinced that you were so.—Oh! this is really cruel; for should you insist on knowing my inmost thoughts, I should not have a pain the less, and you would have one the more. I wish you could forget how much I love you. How is it possible I should forget it, when you put me in mind of it every instant?—Do you desire then that I should leave you?—I think our situation requires it.—Mighty well, then lay your commands upon me; that is the shortest way.—What! drive you away! you, my friend! no; never. My concern is for you alone.—Don't let that be your plea, for I declare that I shall be miserable without you.—You fancy so, but absence—Aye, absence, a fine remedy truly for such a love as mine!—Depend upon it, Erasfe, you will meet with more deserving objects, more amiable and less unjust than I.—It may be so, I am very glad of it; and so let them remain for any concern of mine.—You think so at present.—Yes, I think so at present, and so I shall as long as I live. I know myself, and I know what
 women

women are; don't imagine that any of those will ever make me happy or unhappy.—I do believe that you will not seek immediately for another attachment; but there are amusements in the world to dissipate one's thoughts.—Amusements! and with whom? No; there is nothing there that can amuse me. Here, at least, I have the pleasure of seeing you; you speak to me with kindness, and I am sure not to be out of your memory. If I was absent from you, my imagination would be my torture.—And what scene can it represent more grievous than what you see?—I see nothing, Madam, I don't desire to see any thing; only be so good as not to make me the confidant of your pleasures.—Well, I admire your moderation!—To be sure there is great merit in my being moderate; would you have me quarrel with you?—No: but it is natural to complain.—Of what? I can't tell; I don't know how to reconcile so much love with so much reason.—O dear me, Madam, every one has his particular way of loving; mine I own is not to make excursions beyond prudence: if railing will please you, I might rail as well as another; but I much question its success.—I don't flatter myself so much, as to fancy that I am quite free from it in the bottom of your heart. No; upon my truth and honour, my heart respects you equally with my tongue. I never caught myself in one instance of anger with you. However, I see you pine away, consumed with melancholy.—I am not naturally gay.—You fall from your appetite.—A little suffices nature.—I am very sure you don't sleep.—I ask your pardon, I do sleep a little, and that is the happiest part of my life; for methinks I see you in my slumbers almost such as I would desire

to

to see you when awake.—Erasfe!—Cecilia!—Pray what do you mean?—I take it ill of you.—Faith, Madam, this is too great a tyranny; not even to allow me my dreams! You are in reality what you please to be; let me indulge myself so far as to see you in idea, such as would please me.—Let us have done with all this, and talk reason. These dreams that I am not to know, they nurse your passion.—So much the better, Madam, so much the better; I should be very sorry to be weaned from it.—And why will you so obstinately persist in loving me without hopes?—Not so, if you please, that is not at all the case. If your sentiments were founded on reason and justice, they would be everlasting; but—Don't flatter yourself, Erasfe, I love, and for life.—I don't flatter myself, Cecilia, 'tis you that asperse yourself. Your love is only a fit that will have its crisis. It is not gentleman-like to talk ill of one's rival; I say nothing. I trust to the solidity of your judgment and the delicacy of your sentiments.—They are both blind.—That is owning that they are not. One must have seen, or have still a glimpse of sight to know that you don't see perfectly.—I confess it; I remember to have seen faults in Floricour; but I don't perceive that he has any at present.—The time will come, depend upon't; 'tis on him I build my hopes.—But if I am to be married to Floricour, as every thing is preparing for it—Why then I shall have neither hopes nor fears, and my resolution is fixt.—How fixt?—Nothing in the world more easy; suppose that I was engaged in battle, and that a musket ball—O heavens! what do you mean?—What do I mean? Why, is there any thing surprising to imagine one's self in the army; and—Ah! cruel

cruel friend, how can you alarm me so? And how with so much indifference give me to apprehend a misfortune which makes me shudder, and would render me for ever miserable. Cecilia was almost in tears when Floricour arrived. Eraste left them together according to custom. This good friend of ours, my dear Cecilia, said Floricour, is a very dull, stupid mortal; don't you think so? He is a very honest man, reply'd Cecilia, whose virtues I respect.—In good troth, he and his virtues would do well to go and be tiresome somewhere else. In the country one wants a little relief; company that is amusing.—He may have some secret reason for his sadness and his reserve.—I do believe it, and I fancy I have guess'd the cause. Why do you blush, Cecilia? I shall be discreet; your confusion imposes on me silence.—And pray, Sir, why should I be in any confusion? You believe that Eraste is in love with me; and it is true, I pity him, and give him friendly advice; I don't see any reason for me to blush.—Such a confession, charming Cecilia, makes you still more estimable; but you must own that you make it somewhat late.—Not in the least, Sir, I did not think that I had a right to dispose of a secret which was none of my own; and you never should have known it from me, had you not surpris'd it. There is in revealings of that kind a cruelty and ostentation that are not in my character; one ought at least to have some regard for those we have made unhappy. This is downright heroism, cry'd Floricour, in a tone of irony and resentment. And this friend, pray, that you value so much, does he know upon what terms we are?—Yes, he does; I have inform'd him of all.—What! and he still has the goodness to remain here?—I was
pre-

preparing him to take his leave.—Oh ! I have nothing more to say ; I should have been surprized if one of your nice punctilio had not prevented me from doing it. You were, no doubt, sensible of the indecency of suffering a profess'd lover to see you give yourself to his rival. It would really be a piece of inhumanity to oblige him to be a witness to the sacrifice you make of him to me. When does he think fit to take himself away ? I can't tell ; I have not had the courage to prescribe to him exactly the time, and he has not the resolution to do it himself.—Why, Cecilia, this is trifling. Who then is to inform him that we should be pleased with his absence ? It would not be right for me to do it.—No, Sir, don't be uneasy on that head ; I shall do it myself.—Uneasy, Madam ! Why do you honour me so much as to imagine that I am jealous ? I declare to you that I am not ; my scruples were all upon your account ; and if it gives you the least concern—Yes, Sir, it gives me great concern to deprive a worthy friend of his only satisfaction. But I have learnt how to lay a constraint on myself.—Constraint, Madam ! that is saying a great deal ; I won't have you constrained, it would be the means of making me hateful in your eyes : no, no, I'll go and intreat in the most pressing manner this worthy friend not to abandon you.—Go on, Sir, your irony is well-timed, and I deserve it ; to have let you usurp the freedom of talking to me in such a tone. I ask pardon, reply'd Floricour, seeing her tears ready to flow ; I am quite concerned. If I have said any thing to displease you, I hope you will forgive my imprudence ; I did not know how much you interested yourself for my rival and your friend. So saying, he left her in a pet ;
and

and she was overwhelmed with grief at such unkind usage.

Erasme, at his return, found her in this disconsolate situation. What is the matter? said he, what has happened? The tears trickle down your cheeks!—And well they may; you see one of the most unhappy women on earth. I know that my weakness is my undoing, and yet I cannot get the better of it. A man for whom I have given up every other connection, still doubts of my sincerity; he despises me, for he suspects me.—I understand you, Madam, he is jealous, and must be made easy. Your quiet is at stake; there is nothing in the world that I would not sacrifice, if it could procure you the least satisfaction. Farewel, may you live long and happy, for then I shall be less unhappy. This was heightening Cecilia's distress. My worthy friend, said she, when I exhorted you to leave me, I exhorted you for your own sake, more than for mine. The struggle and self-denial I then made, had nothing debasing; but to deprive myself of your company, only to humour the whims of an unjust man, to drive away suspicions that I should never have thought myself liable to, and then to be obliged to justify my love, by sacrificing my friendship! it is both shameful and mortifying. No; never did any thing give me so much pain. You must put up with it, if you really love Floricour.—Yes, my good friend, pity me, but I really do love him. Erasme wanted no further information, so took his leave.

Floricour did all in his power to mitigate Cecilia's vexation. Nobody was more complying when his will was comply'd with. Erasme was almost forgot; and what is not forgot for what we love? Cecilia had nothing remaining of all

her former pleasures and connexions but one very innocent, inoffensive amusement; a little canary bird that she had reared from the nest, and which, by instinct and custom, answered to all her caresses. It knew her voice, and fluttered about her at command. It always sang when she was present, eat out of her hand, and sipped from her lips. She gave it freedom to rove about, but it never seemed more happy than when invited to return to its dear mistress; and then it was no sooner perched upon her stays, but it seemed to catch the motions of her heart, to which its melodious notes corresponded. Can you believe that the imperious, selfish Floricour was offended at this harmless attention that Cecilia had for her pretty favourite? I am resolved, said he, one day to himself, to be convinced whether her love for me is proof against such trifling affections. It would be odd enough if her bird should be put in competition with her lover. It may be so; but I will be convinced of it before night. Where is, said he, smiling, your little darling?—He enjoys the sweet air and his liberty, fluttering about from spray to spray.—And are not you afraid that it may make an abuse of that liberty, and never return to you again?—I should forgive it, if I thought it could be the happier for it.—Let us see then whether it is so very obsequious to your desires? be so kind as to call it in?—Cecilia made the usual signal, and the bird immediately flew to her hand.—Why this is charming! but you have too great a fondness for the little creature, and I am jealous of it; I must have all or nothing from the person I love. He had scarce spoke, when he endeavoured to seize the sweet favourite, and twist off its head. Cecilia screamed, and the canary

canary bird made its escape, and she, frightened almost to death, fainted away. Her attendants hastened to her assistance, and she came to herself. Soon as she could open her eyes, she saw at her feet not the man once so much beloved, but the most hateful of men. Be gone, Sir, said she, I look upon you with horror and detestation. This last stroke sets your odious character in full light; and I see in it as much meanness as there is cruelty. Be gone, I say, and leave my house this moment, never to set foot into it again. You are very happy that I respect myself still more than I despise you. O, my dear Eraste! my worthy friend! to whom was I sacrificing you? Floricour went away trembling with shame and fury. The canary bird returned at the well-known voice of its mistress; and I believe it is needless to inform you that Eraste was soon recalled.



THE SHAM PHILOSOPHER.

CLARISSA had for a long time heard talk of nothing else but philosophers. What kind of men are they? said she. I should be glad to see one. She was told that real philosophers were very scarce; that they were not the most communicable men in the world, but yet were very plain and simple in their manners, without any singularities. Why then, said she, they must be of two sorts, for in all that I have been told, a philosopher is a whimsical creature, that makes profession of being like nobody else. Of such as those she was answered, there are swarms; you may have as many as you please.

Clarissa was at her county-seat amidst a set of her trifling, frivolous acquaintance, whose whole study was how to kill time. She longed to see a philosopher, when the sententious Aristus was presented to her, as one of the first rate. Is the gentleman then a philosopher? said she. Yes, Madam, answered Aristus.—Philosophy is a very fine thing! is it not?—Madam, it is the knowledge of good and evil, or rather that of wisdom. What! is it nothing else, said Doris? And what does this wisdom produce, continued Clarissa? to make one's self happy, I suppose?—Yes, Madam, and to make others happy. I shall be a philosopher too, said the innocent Lucinda, in a low voice, for I have been told a hundred times, that it was in my power to be very happy, if I would but make others so. Mere stuff, replied Doris, who does not know that? 'tis like the make-believe in a play, that every body sees through.

Aristus, with a supercilious smile, gave them to understand, that philosophical happiness did not consist in what a pretty woman might either bestow or receive.—So I thought, said Clarissa, for, what is more unlike a pretty woman than a philosopher? But let us hear in what manner, the wise Aristus constitutes his happiness.—O Madam! that is quite clear: I have no prejudices, I depend on nobody, I live upon little, I have no attachments, and I speak what I think. What! have no attachments! love-nothing! remarked Cleon. Methinks that is a very unfavourable disposition towards making any body happy. Why, Sir, reply'd the philosopher, do you never do a good and generous action but where you love? have you an affection for the poor miserable object that begs your charity,
which

which you commiserate and relieve as you pass by? Just in the same manner we philosophers communicate to the human species the lights that our knowledge has acquired. What, said Doris, is it with such lights as those that you pretend to make people happy?—Yes, Madam, and to be so ourselves. It must be a very slender happiness indeed! said a fat lusty lady, the widow of the lord president Ponval. And pray, Sir, said Lucinda, has a philosopher much pleasure with all his happiness?—He has but one pleasure, that of despising all.—Very amusing indeed! said abruptly, Madam Ponval. And pray if you love nothing, of what use is your soul?—Of what use? I employ it in the only use that is worthy of its regard; to observe and contemplate the marvellous ways of nature. Why, what have you to do with nature, resumed Clarissa, if men, I mean those that are like you, have no attachments, no connections?—Those that are like me, Madam! I don't lay any stress upon terms, though 'tis saying a great deal. But, however, that nature which takes up my attention, has for me the attractive charms of curiosity, I mean that curiosity which is the fountain of knowledge; as what is commonly called desire, is the impulse of our sensations. O! I understand that perfectly, said Doris. Curiosity, to be sure, is something; but do you look upon desire as nothing at all?—Desire, as I told you before, is an attraction of a different kind.—And pray, why do you yield to one; whilst you resist the other?—O! Madam, 'tis because the enjoyments of the mind are unmixed with bitterness and trouble, whilst those of the heart always enclose a latent poison. I hope, said Cleon, that you have feelings at least?—Yes,

I have feelings, as you call them, but I never let them usurp any power over me; my soul receives their impressions as a glass. None but the objects of pure intelligence can possibly have any lively effect on me. What a dull sort of a creature is he, said Doris aside to Clarissa, for goodness sake what brought the fellow here? Hush! replied Clarissa, he will do very well in the country; we may make game of him.

Cleon had a mind to expose still more the character of Aristus, and therefore mentioned to him how much he was surprized at his resolution not to love any thing; for, in short, do you really think that there is nothing in the world that deserves one's affection? I behold surfaces answered the philosopher, but I mistrust the substance. The thing to be enquired into, said Cleon, is to know whether your mistrust has any real foundation.—That it has, I promise you; you may take my word for it. I have seen enough of the world to be convinced that the whole globe is peopled with wicked, irrational and ungrateful beings. If you did but look about you, Sir, said Clarissa with an air of reproach, you would be less unjust, and perhaps more happy.

The philosopher seemed a little confounded, but carried it off as if he had not taken notice of what she said. Dinner, they were told, was on the table. Aristus handed Clarissa in, and sat himself down next to her, without any ceremony. I am resolved, said she to him, to reconcile you with the human species.—That is impossible, Madam, quite impossible; for man is of all creatures the most vicious. What can be more cruel, for example, than what your table is spread with? How many innocent animals sacrificed to the voracious appetite of man! The ox,
what

what harm has he been guilty of? The lamb, symbol of candour and innocence, what right have you upon his life? And the pretty pigeons, that bill and coo on the tops of our houses, whose disconsolate partners are perhaps now lamenting their loss? O heavens, if the animal creation would vouchsafe to admit mankind amongst them, in what rank would they place us? The tyger, the vulture, the crocodile, all would yield to us the pre-eminence of voracity. Every body concluded that the philosopher lived on nothing but vegetables, and no one durst offer him any of those meats which were the objects of his compassion. Come, help me to some, said he, now that they are massacred they must be eat. Thus, whilst he was stuffing of every thing he saw, he declaimed against the profusion, the delicacy, and the rarities of all that was upon the table. Ah! happy age, he cried, when man grazed with his herd! Here, you! a glass of wine, pray. How nature is degenerated! Thus railing, eating, and drinking, the philosopher got tipsy, in describing the limpid stream in which his forefathers quenched their thirst.

Cleon seized this moment, when wine, 'tis said, banishes all reservedness, to dive into the real cause of his philosophical misanthropy. Well now, said he to Aristus, that you have deigned to mix with human creatures, can you think them so very odious? Own that you condemn them on hear-say; and that they are no ways so blameable as is reported.—Upon hear-say! Sir, I would have you to know that a philosopher depends on no judgment but his own. 'Tis because that I have seen, that I have scrutinized the very inside of men, that I believe them to be proud, impertinent, and unjust.—Nay, pray

Sir, spare us a little : our great admiration of your superior qualities deserves some regard ; for, in short, you needs must own that we reverence merit. And how do you reverence it ? replied hastily the philosopher. What ! in neglecting and forsaking it ? How times are altered ! The philosophers of Greece were the oracles of their age, the legislators of their country. But now-a-days wisdom and virtue languish in oblivion, whilst by low, dirty, intriguing methods, men rise in the world. Perhaps, said Cleon, that may be owing to your own fault, for if you great sages will not be communicable and shew yourselves, how are you to be found out ?——What, would you have them thrust themselves into your faces ? or rather fall down at the feet of these wise distributors of rewards and pensions ?——It is very true, replied Cleon, they ought to be spared that trouble ; a man, such as you, of your talents (I ask pardon if I quote you for an example.) There is no harm in that, replied the philosopher, with seeming modesty.——A man like you, I say, should not be obliged to pay his court.——Pay my court ! I pay my court ! no, no ; their pride shall never be gratified to that height. Thank heaven, I know what value I ought to set upon myself ! sooner I'll retire into the desarts, than degrade my being. That would be a loss indeed, said Cleon, should you withdraw from society ; born to enlighten and instruct mankind, you will not leave them in darkness and ignorance. Ladies, continued he, you can't imagine how many blessings philosophy bestows on the world ! I dare say that Aristus has discovered numberless moral truths, and that there are at present fifty new virtues at least of his own coining. As for virtues, replied Aristus, with

with something like modesty, I have not invented many, but I have unveiled a multitude of vices. And why strip them of their mask? said Lucinda; could you not let them hide their deformity? For my part, said the corpulent Madam Ponval, I am your humble servant there; I would sooner deal with undoubted vices, than with equivocal virtues; one knows at least what to trust to. Thus it is, cry'd Aristus with resentment, that we are recompensed; for which reason I am resolved to exist only for myself, and let the world go as it can. No, Sir, answered Clarissa with great politeness, as they rose from table, I do expect that you will exist for us. Have you any particular business that calls you to town? None at all. A philosopher never troubles himself with business. Why then, I retain you here; philosophy must love the country, and I promise that you shall have as much solitude and liberty as you please. Liberty, Madam, said the philosopher with a faltering voice, I fear you will not be so good as your word.

The company went into the garden, and dispersed themselves different ways as they liked. Aristus, with a thoughtful air, retired into a byewalk, to meditate and digest, without thinking of any thing; I mistake, he was thinking of Clarissa. Why, said he to himself, a pretty woman, a good house, every convenience of life; all that looks well. Let us see the end on't. I must own, continued he, that there is something very odd in this same what they call society. If I was gallant, eager, amiable, complaisant, I should pass unnoticed; the women meet with it every where, and their vanity is surfeited with the same dull profuseness of flattery. But to tame a bear, to humanize a philosopher, bend his stubborn
 I 5 pride,

pride, and soften his heart, is a triumph rare and difficult, which sooths their vanity. Clarissa of her own accord throws herself into the net, I'll wait the event without being liable to be exposed.

On the other side, Clarissa's guests were diverting themselves at the philosopher's expence. What a queer creature he is! said Doris! what shall we make of him? Why, a farce, answered Cleon, if Clarissa will but come into it. My plan is already formed; he communicated his idea, and they all cry'd, O let us have a play by all means! and Clarissa, with much persuasion, consented to act a part. She was a great deal too young and too pretty for such a philosopher, and some words that he had dropped, some unguarded looks that had escaped him, were sure tokens of the plot's succeeding. She therefore, as if by chance, strayed into the walk where Aristus had withdrawn. I am afraid I interrupt you, said she, I ask pardon, but I am only crossing over; don't let me disturb you.—You don't disturb me in the least, madam, I can meditate with you to choose. Can you? said Clarissa; it will give me great pleasure; for I perceive that a philosopher does not think like other folks; I should be glad to see things through your eyes.—'Tis most true, Madam, philosophy seems to have created a new world. The vulgar behold nature only in the lump, the particulars are reserved for us. 'Tis for us that nature takes pleasure in disposing with such wonderful contrivance the fibres of these leaves, the stamina of those flowers, the texture of that rind; an emmet's nest is to me a republick; and every atom with which this globe is formed, seems to me a new world. All that is very marvellous, answered Clarissa;

rissa; and pray what was now the object of your meditation?—Those little birds, Madam.—Are not they very happy?—Most happy without doubt! how should they be otherwise? Independance, equality, few wants, pleasures without constraint, forgetfulness of the past, no uneasiness for the future; they have no other care but to pick up their living, and perpetuate their species. Ah Madam! what a lesson for mankind!—You must then own, Sir, that it is delightful to live in the country; for, in short, it in some measure approaches our condition to that of the animal creation, and like them we seem to have no other guide but the sweet instinct of nature. Oh! would it were true! but, alas! that character is effaced from the heart of man. Society has corrupted every thing.—You are in the right; what you call society is very cumbersome, and really when one wants nobody, it is most natural to live only for one's self.—That is what I have repeated a thousand times, what I have laid down as an axiom, but nobody minds either what I say or write. Now you, Madam, for example, that have just acknowledged the truth of this principle, have you the resolution to put it in practice? I can only wish, answered Clarissa, that philosophy may grow in fashion; I shall not be the last to come into the mode, and it would not become me to be the first.—That's the language of you all. Nobody has the courage to lead the way, and so the human species groans under the yoke of opinion, and in the chains of custom!—What would you have us do, Sir? Our peace, our tranquillity, our honour, every thing that is dear to us, depends on decorum.—Well, Madam, stick to your tyrannical decorums, let

let your virtues be like your cloaths, cut out after the fashion of the times; your soul is your own, the world has no right but to the outside; you owe it nothing but the appearances. Those decorums so much insisted on, what are they else but appearances managed with art? the inside, Madam, is the sanctuary of free-will, and free-will is independent. I perceive, said Clarissa then, that I may do whatever I please, so I do but stop there and save appearances. No doubt, reply'd the philosopher; it is better to stop short than run the risk of committing imprudences, for do you know now what it is that constitutes vice in your sex? 'Tis when you are not watchful over your conduct, and seem to have no respect for yourselves. What, Sir, said Clarissa affecting an air of satisfaction, does vice consist then only in imprudence. Before I answer that question, give me leave to ask you one. What do you understand by vice? Is it not whatever disturbs the order of nature, that which hurts or may prove hurtful?—The very thing.—Well, Madam, all that is nothing more than outward shew; why then submit our opinions and our sentiments to the prejudices of others? Behold in those little birds that sweet and noble liberty which nature imprinted in you, and which you have lost. Ah! said Clarissa with a sigh, the death of my husband restored to me that precious gift; but I am afraid that I shall be deprived of it once more.—O heavens! what do I hear! do you think of engaging again?—Why, I can't well tell.—Can't tell!—They will have it so.—And who are those enemies to your welfare that want to have you enchained a second time? for take my word for it, marriage is slavery, and supreme happiness exists in liberty alone. But pray who

is the husband that they are for imposing upon you?—'Tis Cleon.—Cleon, Madam! I don't wonder at the air of importance that he assumes here. He questions, he decides, he deigns sometimes to appear affable; he has that sort of condescending politeness that seems to lower himself to our level. 'Tis very plain he does the honours of the house, and I must henceforward pay him the respect and deference which are his due.—You owe, Sir, nothing to each other but mutual civilities; and I pretend that all my guests are on an equal footing.—Pretend, Clarissa! ah! your choice destroys all equality amongst the men, and he that is to possess you. But let us talk no more about it, I have already said too much; this is no place for a philosopher; give me leave to retire. I can't consent to that, said she, I fall into certain irresolutions out of which you alone can extricate me. I must own that there is something very comforting in philosophy; but if a philosopher should prove deceitful! what a dangerous friend he would be? But I leave you, for I don't choose that we should be seen *tête à tête*. I'll join the company; don't be long before you follow me. What is then, said Clarissa to herself as she withdrew, that they call philosophy? Courage, said Aristus, hugging himself, Cleon holds but by a slender thread. Clarissa rejoined the company, and, not without blushing, gave an account of what had passed. This first scene gained her a general applause. What, said plump Madam Ponval, knitting her brows, do you think that I shall be only an idle spectator? No, no, I am resolved to act a part in the farce; and I promise you that it shan't be less comical than any. You have taken it into your heads to make a fool of this man of wisdom; and I tell you, that I will

will have that honour.—You!—Yes I; make a joke of it as much as you please; but with my triple chin, my mustachoes of right Havanna, and fifty years over my head, I bid defiance to all your charms and graces. The whole company commended the challenge with redoubled bursts of laughter. I am very serious, continued Madam Ponval, and if you think that one is not sufficient, join all three together, unite your forces to dispute with me the prize; I defy you all three with your combined attractions. Haste, divine Cloris, charming Lucinda, adorable Clarissa, haste and display all that beauty and coquetry have most seducing, I despise it all. She spoke in so resolute a tone, that it was enough to make her rivals tremble.

Aristus accosted them, and Cleon put on a melancholy, dejected look. Clarissa affected, in regard to the philosopher, an air of mysterious reservedness. There were few words, but abundance of ogling. When Aristus retired into his apartment, he found it furnished in the highest and richest taste of luxury. O my stars! said he to those who, for their own diversion, had shewn him into his chamber, is it not very ridiculous to be at all this sumptuous expence only for a man to lie down and sleep? Was it thus that the Lacedemonians reposed? O Lycurgus, what would you say? A toilet! that is carrying the joke too far. Do they take me for a Sibarite. I withdraw; this is more than I can submit to. Why, answered Clarissa, would you have the furniture taken down? I'll order it to be done, if you desire it; but believe me, Sir, enjoy the sweets and conveniencies of life wherever they fall in your way. A philosopher ought to know how to do without any thing; but at the same time

time he should learn to accommodate himself with every thing. Well, if it must be so, said Aristus, growing a little calmer, I must comply, but I shall never sleep on that heap of down. Good night, ladies.—Good night, Sir. In good troth, said he, as he got into bed, voluptuousness is no bad thing! and the sage fell fast asleep.

His dreams recalled to his imagination the discourse that passed between him and Clarissa. He awoke with the pleasing idea that what they call virtue in a woman would make but a weak resistance.

He was not yet out of bed when a servant came to ask, whether he chose to go into the bath before he dressed? The bath was a good omen. With all my heart, said he, I shall bathe; the bath is an institution of nature; and as for perfumes, they are the produce of the earth; why should we refuse its gifts? He was almost tempted to sit down at the fine toilet; but he could not for shame. He therefore contented himself in putting off as much as he could the slovenly philosophic air; for which the glass was often consulted. Lord bless me! what a figure you make, exclaimed Clarissa! as soon as he appeared; why don't you dress like other people? Those cloaths, and then your hair so undressed, all together give you a vulgar look that is not natural to you.—Ah, Madam! is it by the look that you are to judge of men? Would you have me submit to the follies of fashion, and appear like your Cleons?—Why not, Sir? Do you know that they take advantage of your simplicity, and that the affected neglect of your outward appearance, lessens very much that consideration which is due to your inward perfections. For I myself now, with all my prepossession in your favour,
I am

I am obliged to call my reason to my assistance ; for to be sure the first sight is not to your advantage ; and very often the first sight with most people is what fixes their judgment. Why not give virtue all the necessary charms it has a right to ? —No, Madam, virtue, like truth, requires no artifice ; the more naked, the more beautiful ; you disguise it in attempting to adorn it.—Well, Sir, let virtue then be its own admirer ; for my part, I declare to you that I can't abide any thing that has a mean, clownish look ; is it not very surprising, when a person has received from nature a mien and figure above the common standard, that he should take delight in degrading them !—But, my dear Madam, what would you say of a philosopher that should make dress his study, and behave like one of your beaux ? —Why, I should say that he endeavours to please in making himself agreeable ; and he does right. For don't flatter yourself, Aristus, it is not an easy matter to please.—Ah ! Madam, is there any thing I would not do to appear agreeable in your eyes ? If you are in earnest, said Clarissa looking at him tenderly, it is but a quarter of an hour's trouble. Here, Jessamy, Jessamy ! go and dress the gentleman's hair. Aristus yielded, but not without a blush, to her soft persuasions. The man of wisdom is at his toilet.

Jessamy with a light, skilful hand, tiff and dressed his hair in the most fashionable curl. Aristus could not forbear admiring the metamorphosis. His countenance is quite altered for the better ; he cannot conceive the reason why ! What will they say, thought he, when they see me ! let them think what they please, I think the philosopher makes as good and as genteel an appearance as any of them. He presented himself puffed

fed with pride in an aukward timorous manner: O! cry'd out Clarissa, this is as it should be; how charming he looks! There is nothing but that nasty grisly dark colour of your coat that offends my eyes.—Dear Madam, consider what, and who I am; for my reputation's sake, let me preserve the character of gravity, which ought to be inseparable from those of my profession.—Now I desire to know what is this chimerical state of life, that you seem to take so much to heart? I reverence a wise man, but I can't comprehend what this or that colour has to do with wisdom. For example, that brown chesnut, that Mr. Graveair always wears, is it more in nature than the sky-blue, or the lilac? And why, in the name of wonder, must philosophers affect a singularity of colour? All that depends on fancy, chesnut, pink, or lilac. O! the purple lilac for me! there is something so blooming, so soft, so every thing in the lilac, I am sure you would look vastly well in lilac!—Lilac, Madam! a philosopher in lilac!—Yes, Sir, a pale lilac! what would you have? it is my foible. If you will but write immediately to Paris, you may have it tomorrow by dinner-time; don't you think you may?—How, Madam!—Why, it need not be a full dress, a frock will do better for the country; let it be a frock of the colour of my ribband.—It is not possible.—Why not possible? nothing more easy, the journeymen have only to sit up all night.—Dear me, as if that was the difficulty, how long or how short a time it will take to make me ridiculous. Consider, I beg of you, that such a folly is enough to ruin my reputation.—Well, Sir, what if it does, you may give yourself another; 'tis an even wager, that you would be gainer by the change.—I protest to you, Ma-

dam,

dam, that it is terrible to me not to comply with your desire;—but,—O! I am tired with your buts, I don't love to be contradicted. Is it not odd, continued she, that you should refuse me such a trifle? Since you make it of such importance, it is a lesson for me to observe what I am about to do in a much more serious affair. So saying she left the philosopher quite disconcerted, that so small an incident should overset all his hopes. Lilac, said he, lilac! what a contrast! what a ridicule! no matter, she will have it so, and I must perforce submit; the lilac is wrote for.

Madam, said he, returning to Clarissa, you are obeyed. Well; was it any great trouble, answered she, with a scornful smile?—More than I can express, but it was your will and pleasure. All the company admired how well the philosopher's hair was adjusted, especially the fat Madam Ponval, who protested that she never saw a head more elegantly dressed. Aristus thanked her for so flattering a compliment. As for compliments, said she, I never make any; 'tis the base adulterate coin of the world. Never was any thing expressed in so strong and true a light! exclaimed the philosopher, it deserves to be put in print. They found that Madam Ponval was beginning her attack, so they left them together. Why do you imagine then, said she, that nobody can speak sentences but yourself? I'd have you to know that I am a philosopher too, such as you see me.—You, Madam! and pray of what sect? Stoic! Epicurean!—O! faith, I know nothing of the names. I have fifteen hundred pounds a year, which I spend jovially; I have good champaign and good burgundy, which I share with my friends;

friends; I am in perfect health; I do what I please, and let every body else enjoy their liberty. That, Sir, is my sect—And a very good sect it is, Madam, precisely the doctrine of Epicurus.—I declare to you I never learnt any thing; all my knowledge comes from myself. I have read nothing for these twenty years, but the account of my cellar and my bills of fare.—Why, Madam, upon that footing, you are the happiest lady in the world.—Happy, do you say? No, not quite happy; I want a husband, such a one as I should like. My deceased president was a mere ass; he did very well on the bench; understood the law, and nothing else. Now I must have a man that knows how to love, and love nobody but me.—You will find a thousand, Madam,—None of your thousands; I want but a single man, but I will have him a good one. Birth and fortune, all that is very indifferent to me; 'tis the man alone I look for.—Indeed, Madam, you surprize me, you are the first woman I have yet known to act from principle. But is it really only the husband that you seek for?—Nothing but the husband to all intents and purposes; one that I can call my own. Your lovers are a parcel of fly-rogues, that first deceive and then leave us; and we are not even permitted to complain; whereas a husband is our own in the face of the world; and if mine durst presume to play me false, I will have it in my power, with my marriage certificate in hand, to go and honourably tear the harlot's eyes out, that shall have the impudence to rob me of his person.—You are are much in the right, Madam; every body's property ought to be inviolable. But do you know, that there are not many that think with such nice discernment as you-do? What courage! What firmness!—

O F

O! I am a very lioness. I know that I am neither young nor handsome; but I know that I have fifteen hundred a year, which is no bad wedding present, and may perhaps counterbalance the charms of a Lucinda or a Clarissa; and, though love is very scarce at this time, I think that fifteen hundred pounds a year is a good purchase for it. This conversation brought them back just as they were told that supper was ready.

Aristus seemed more thoughtful than usual. He was weighing in his mind the conveniences and inconveniences that might attend his marriage with Madam Ponval; and he was calculating how long a fat, gross, unwieldy woman, turned of fifty, might probably live, as she gulp'd down every night her bottle of champaign, &c. A dispute that arose between Clarissa and Madam Ponval waked him from his reverie. 'Twas Doris that occasioned the dispute. How is it possible, said she, that the presidante has been able to support a *tête à tête* for a whole hour with the philosopher? She that yawns and gapes as soon as she hears one talk reason? Why, in good troth, replied Madam Ponval, 'tis because that your reason has not common sense. Ask this wise man what he thinks of mine? We were talking of what state in life a virtuous and discreet woman ought to chuse, and he joins with me in opinion; that she can't do better than to take a good stout husband. O fie, exclaimed Clarissa! Are we then formed to be slaves? O liberty, supremest of all blessings, what will become of you? Cleon inveighed warmly against that system of liberty. He maintained, that there was not the least shadow of thralldom in the union of hearts and hands. Madam Ponval seconded his motion, and declared, she knew no difference between the love

Love of liberty, and the love of licentiousness. I wish, said she, that this glass of wine may be the last I shall drink, if ever I put my trust in a man, that does not faithfully and truly swear to be mine, and mine alone. All the rest is mere nonsense and cajollery. Why, said Clarissa, that is the very thing that is so mortifying in marriage; love loses all its delicacy with its liberty. Pray, are not you of that opinion, said she to the philosopher?—Why, Madam, I was in your way of thinking; nevertheless I must own, that if liberty has its charms, it is not without its rocks and shoals. It is so great a happiness to have a reasonable inclination, and inconstancy is so natural to man, that I think, when he does happen to meet with an object worthy of a sincere and tender passion, I think, I say, that he is much in the right to secure his happiness, by putting it out of his power to change.—You hear him, ladies, said Madam Ponval! These are the people I like, no flattery in the case. Give me a philosopher for my money; endeavour to seduce him if you can. For my part, I retire quite enchanted. Adieu, philosopher, I want rest; I did not close my eyes last night, and I long to be fast asleep in hopes of a pleasing dream. She accompanied her farewell with a passionate look that sparkled with champagne. Pray, ladies, said Lucinda, did you mind the look she gave? To be sure, replied Doris; who could it escape? 'Tis plain she dotes upon Aristus.—Upon me, Madam! how can you think so? our tastes, our characters are so different! I drink little, I never swear, and I don't like to be tied down.—Aye but Sir, fifteen hundred pounds a year!—Fifteen thousand, Madam, is an affront, if talked of as an inducement to those like me.

Next

Next day Madam Ponval was informed of all that passed in her absence. O the scoundrel! said she, I am piqued, you shall see him at my knees.

I pass slightly over the nocturnal reflections of the wise Aristus. A good coach, a commodious apartment as distant as possible from that of Madam, and the best cook in France; such was the plan of life he was settling. I know my brother philosophers will murmur a little; but I'll stop their mouths with a good dinner. Besides, there is something so philosophical in taking a homely wife, that I sha'n't be suspected to have sought to gratify the senses.

The day of his triumph arrived, and with it the charming lilac suit of cloaths. He gazed at it, and, if he blushed, 'twas more out of vanity than shame. Cleon came into his apartment like one in great agitation, striving to compose himself; and, after casting a look of indignation on the apparatus of his dress, Sir, said he, if I had to do with a man of the world, my first compliment would be, to desire the favour of exchanging a pistol with him: But I am talking to a philosopher, and I wish to have no other combat but that of frankness and virtue. What is the question? said Aristus, not a little perplexed at this preamble. Why, Sir, replied Cleon, I love Clarissa, and she loved me; we were on the point of being united. I don't know by what revolution, she is changed all of a sudden; for she won't listen to a word either of love or Hymen. I had at first but some slight suspicions of the cause of her infidelity, but that blooming lilac dress, which I see there, puts it out of all manner of doubt. I know that pale lilac is her favourite colour; you take her livery; you are my rival.—

I your

I your rival, Sir!—It is evident you are, a thousand circumstances occur to my memory. Your private walks, your whispers, your oglings, and certain mysterious words dropt now and then, but chiefly the violent hatred she has conceived for Madam Ponval, all betrays your secret, and reveals my misfortune. To cut short therefore, this is what I propose, one of us two must give up his pretensions. It is not just to have recourse to violence; let then generosity settle it between us. I love! what do I say? love! I adore Clarissa, and I was happy had you not interfered; I may be so still; time, your absence, and my constant assiduities may perhaps restore her to me. If, on the contrary, you oblige me to renounce all that is dear to me, you see a man in despair, whose only remedy must be in death. Judge, Aristus, whether you are in the same situation. Consider of it, and give me your answer. If the happiness of your life depends on keeping your conquest, I desist, and retire. No, Sir, answered the philosopher with a serene countenance, you shall not overcome Aristus in generosity; and, let it cost me ever so dear, I will convince you that I deserved this mark of your esteem.

Well, said he to himself when Cleon was gone, this is a fine opportunity to display an heroic virtue. Yes, you gentlemen of the polite world! you shall learn to admire us; but hold, perhaps it may not come to their knowledge. O yes, it will; Clarissa can never refrain from telling it to her friends, they will whisper it to others; the adventure is too uncommon not to be noised about. After all, the worst that can happen, is to publish it myself. A good action should be known, no matter through what channel. This age stands in great need of examples; they are lessons

lessons for human kind: However, don't let us be foolishly virtuous, and give up Clarissa before we are sure of Madam Ponval. Let us see what effects sleep and champaign have had.

Reflecting thus in what manner he should act, he desired to dress. The dexterous Jessamy out-did himself. The lilac paraded before the looking-glass with an inward satisfaction, and the philosopher issued blooming out of his apartment, and waited on the lady presidante, who received him with an exclamation of pleasurable surprize; when passing suddenly from joy to confusion, what do I see! she cried; Clarissa's favourite colour! You are very attentive in studying what she likes; go, Aristus, ungrateful go, and set a right value on the cares you take to please her; no doubt but they will be well rewarded. My natural openness, answered Aristus, will not permit me to dissemble with you. 'Tis true, that in the choice of this trifling colour of my coat, I was wholly led by her caprice. I must even tell you more; I confess that my first addresses were for her; the wisest man is not free from foibles; and when a woman prevents our wishes by a certain flattering behaviour, it is very difficult not to yield. I own that my sentiments for her are much diminished. 'Tis a reproach I make myself, and which, Madam, as an accomplice, you ought to reproach yourself with likewise.—Ah! philosopher, if that was true! but that hateful pale lilac turns my thoughts topsy-turvy.—Madam, I put it on with great reluctance, I will pull it off with joy; and if my first plain habit—No, not at all, remain as you are, I like you as you are prodigiously. But what am I about? Ah! Aristus, what a blessing it is to be so handsome! Ah! why am I not handsome?—Don't you know, Madam, that beauty and ugliness have no existence
but

but in opinion? Nothing is beautiful, nothing is ugly in itself. What is called beauty in one country may be homeliness in another, so many men, so many tastes. Ah! now you flatter me, reply'd Madam Ponval, with a juvenile bashfulness, as if she blushed; but alas! I am but too well convinced that I have no other beauty but that of the mind.—Well, Madam, and is not that the quintessence of beauty? The only one that is permanent, and ought to charm a manly and virtuous heart.—O my dear philosopher, that sort of beauty is very little attracting.—It may be so, Madam, to vulgar eyes; but you are not upon that footing. Do you reckon as nothing a majestic air, a noble deportment, and a countenance that characterises? Is majesty then no longer the queen of graces?—But what do you think of bulkiness?—Corpulency, Madam, which passes for a blemish in Europe, is a beauty in Asia. And do you think that the Turks are not judges of beauty in women? Why, for example, all those elegant fine shapes which are admired here, would not even be admitted into the seraglio. The grand seignor knows better. In short, good health is the source of pleasure? and what is more the symbol of it than a pair of plump fair cheeks?—Why you would make me believe that my unwieldiness is very becoming. But then this monstrous nose, that always appears before the rest of my face! What do you complain of? had not the Roman ladies long noses? Examine the antique bustoes—But then they had not such a wide mouth and blubber lips.—Why there again, Madam, large pouting lips are the greatest charm in African beauties, they are like two soft velvet pillows, on which voluptuousness reposes: as for a mouth somewhat wider than common, it gives the countenance an open sprightliness.—

K

That

That may be, when one has handsome white teeth to shew; but my misfortune is—Take a trip to Siam, you will see, Madam, that fine teeth are only found in vulgar mouths; 'tis a shame for a person of distinction to have any such thing. Wherefore I say, that whatever is called beauty, depends entirely on the fantasy of the beholder; for in effect, there is no real beauty but in the object we admire.—And shall I be your object, my dear philosopher, said the fat lady, spreading her fan before her face?—I ask pardon if I hesitate in giving you an answer. My scrupulousness renders me timorous; I make profession of a disinterestedness that you are not so well enough acquainted with, as to take it for granted. You talked to me of fifteen hundred a year, there lies my perplexity.—I hope, Sir, you do me the justice not to think me capable of harbouring any such paltry suspicions. But I plainly perceive 'tis Clarissa that raises all these objections; I see your drift; 'tis mighty well. You may leave me as soon as you please.—Yes, Madam, I will leave you for a moment, only to acquit myself of a promise I made to Cleon. He was turned off on my account; he complained to me, and I gave him my word that I would do all in my power to engage Clarissa to give him her hand. After that, think that I am in love with her still.—Is it possible? oh! I am transported! I cannot resist after so great a sacrifice. Go and fulfil your promise and return quickly; let me not languish, and this afternoon we will leave the country.

I cannot but wonder, said Aristus to himself as he went away, how I can have the resolution to marry her. She is frightful, that is certain; but then she is very rich: with these reflections he waited on Clarissa. He found her at her toilet,
and

and Cleon with her, who assumed as soon as he appeared a gloomy dejected look. Ah! what a pretty suit of cloaths! said she; pray turn about and let us admire it. What do you think of it Cleon, is it not vastly handsome? 'Twas I that chose it. I see that but too plainly, Madam, reply'd Cleon, with a still more melancholy air. Let us, said Aristus, put an end to all this trifling. I am come to clear myself of a crime of which I am accused, and to fulfil a duty that I think incumbent on me. Cleon loves you, you did love him; he loses your heart, as he informs me, and I am the cause of it.—To be sure, Sir, but where is the necessity of all this mystery? I have just declared it to him.—And I, Madam, declare it to you, that it never shall be said that I made a worthy man unhappy; one who deserves you, and dies if he does not obtain you. I love you, perhaps, as much as he does, I own it without shame; but his inclination has a prior and stronger title than mine to the resistless impulse of passion; and very likely I may find in myself resources which he has not. O the wonderful man! cry'd out Cleon, taking him in his arms. What can I say! I am confounded with your goodness. There is no need, reply'd modestly Aristus, your generosity set the example, I only imitate you. Come, ladies, said Clarissa, seeing Doris and Lucinda approach, come and behold the triumph of philosophy! Aristus yields me to his rival, and sacrifices his love for me to the happiness of a man that he is scarce acquainted with. Surprise and admiration were acted to the life; and Aristus taking Clarissa's hand, which he put into Cleon's, swallowed, in all the pride of modesty, the sweets of adulation. Be happy, said he, and cease to be surprized at an effort, painful as it is, that carries with it its own reward. What would
be

be philosophy, if virtue was not a compensation for every thing else. At these words he retired, as if not willing to be witness to his glory.

Madam Ponval waited for him. Well, is it all done, said she?—Yes, they are united, I am my own, and I am yours.—O my victory is complete; you are mine! Come then and let me enchain you. Ah, Madam, said he, falling at her knees, what an empire have you assumed over me? O Socrates! O Plato! what is become of your disciple? Can you find him out in this disguise? Whilst he was thus exclaiming, the brawny lady was tying a pink-coloured ribband about his neck, and imitating Lucinda in the Oracle* with a most playful, comical air of simplicity, gave him the name of *charmer*.—O heavens; what would become of me if people were to know. For goodness sake, Madam, let us fly; let us take ourselves away from the company that observes all we do; spare me the mortification—What do you mean by mortification? I pretend, said she, that you shew them how great an honour you deem it to wear my chains. At these words the folding doors opened, and discovered Madam Ponval leading the philosopher with her ribband. Here he is, said she to the company, who immediately surrounded him; here he is, this proud supercilious man, who is so deeply in love with the charms of my iron chest; take him, I deliver him up to you; I have acted my part. At this ridiculous catastrophe the room rang with the name of *charmer*, mixt with peals of laughter. Aristus, tearing his fine powdered hair, and rending the pretty lilac cloaths with mere rage and vexation, cursing the whole perfidious sex, went away fully resolved to compose a book against his degenerate age, declaring loudly that there was not one wise man in the world, except himself.

* The Oracle, a little French play translated and brought on the English stage by Mrs. Cibber.